VIDYODAYA

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF BOOKS
4 NOV 1949
MADRAS

SILVER JUBILEE

1924-1949

SOUVENIR

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SERVICE SACRIFICE

Souvenir

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Cover designed by P. Prasanna—Artist

SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

PROGRAMME

February 24th 1949—FOUNDER'S DAY.

8-30 a.m. Thanksgiving Ceremony.
Speakers—Rev. John Milns.
Swami Ritajananda.
Mr. S. M. Fossil.

Presentation of silver gifts to the School by the Prefects of the four houses—Premalaya, Sathyalaya, Sevalaya and Thyagalaya.

9-30 a.m. Distribution of sweets by Mr. and Mrs. Kalyan Raman.

10 to 4 p.m. Holiday.

5-15 p.m. Mrs. E. S. Appasamy's At Home to Members of the Board of Management, Members of the Silver Jubilee Committee, Members of the Souvenir Committee and the Staff Members of Vidyodaya.

March 4th 1949

9-30—12-30 p.m. Exhibition of the work of the School opened by Sri A. S. Ayyappan Pillay, M.A., Phd., Superintendent, Government Museum.

Sale of Vidyodaya Silver Jubilee Souvenirs, picture post cards, badges, School costume.

5-15 p.m. SILVER JUBILEE PUBLIC MEETING.

1. Prayer Song.
2. Welcome by Sri S. Ramaswamy Naidu, Mayor of Madras.
3. A Message given by the Hon. Minister of Education Sri T. S. Avanashilingam.
4. Inaugural address by Sri M. Ruthnasamy, C.I.E.
5. Address by Mrs. E. S. Appasamy.
6. Presentation Address by Sree R. Jacob, B.A., L.T.
7. Address by old student Sree L. Menon, B.Sc.
8. Vote of Thanks by Sri S. V. B. Rao—President of the Board of Management.

219278

March 5th 1949—OLD STUDENTS' DAY.

9-30—12-30 p.m. Exhibition of work.

11-30 a.m. Business Meeting.

12-30 p.m. Lunch for old students and Staff Members.

3-15 p.m. Tea for old students and Staff Members.

6-15 p.m. The Dance Drama "Fantasia of the Hours of the Day" performed in the presence of the Governor of Madras and the Maharani Saheba at the Museum Theatre.

12, 34, N49

The Silver Jubilee Committee

President :
Sri S. Ramaswamy Naidu, Mayor of Madras.

Treasurer :
Sri V. P. Natarajan.

Secretary :
Sreemathy K. Gangabai, B.A., L.T.

Parents :
Sreemathy L. Rai.
Sri Ramanujulu Naidu.
Dr. Shanta Sundari, M.B., B.S.
Sri S. Vijayarangam, B.A.

Staff :
Sreemathy R. Jacob, B.A., L.T.
Sri Prasanna Rao (Artist).

Old Students :
Sreemathy A. Krishnabai, M.A. (Hons.)
Sreemathy K. P. Leela Menon, B.SC.

Souvenir Committee

Sri S. V. Aiyar, B.A., B.L.
Sri D. Richards, B.A.
Sri J. B. Appasamy, M.A. (Cantab.)

Board of Management

President :
Sri S. V. B. Rao, B.A., B.L. Advocate.

Secretary & Correspondent :
Mrs. E. S. Appasamy, B.A.

Members :
Sreemathy J. Chandran.
Sri C. P. Michael, B.A.
Sreemathy V. Appasamy, B.A., F.T.T.C.

Staff Members of Vidyodaya

Headmistress: Sree V. Appasamy, B.A. (U.S.A.) F.T.T.C. (ENG.)
First Assistant & Bursar: Sree R. Jacob, B.A., L.T.
Warden: Sree E. Mathew.

Graduate Trained Teachers

Sree R. Dawson, B.A., L.T. (Natural Science).
Sree K. Gangabai, B.A., L.T. (Mathematics).
Sree L. Muthayya, B.A., L.T. (History).
Sree P. Chari, B.A., L.T. (Physical Science).

Secondary Trained Teachers

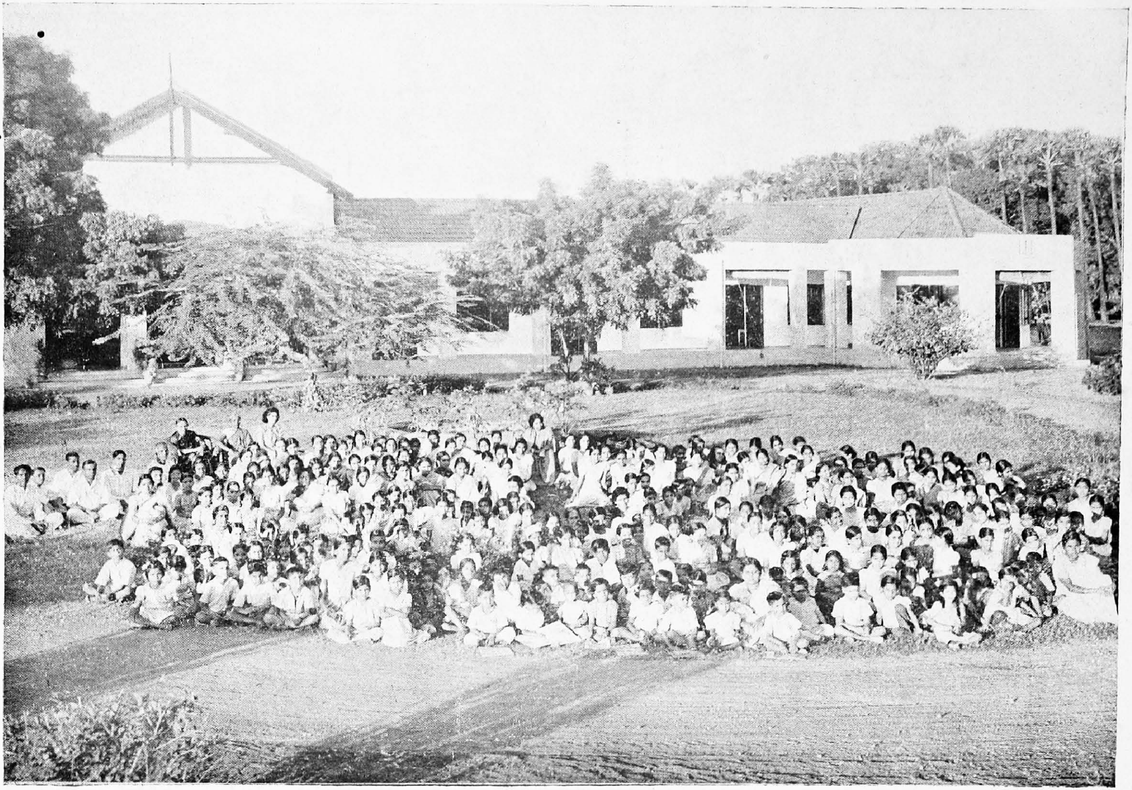
Sree S. Samuel.
Sree E. K. Constantine.
Sree G. Noble.
Sree E. Daniel.
Sree S. George.
Sree G. J. James.
Sree S. P. Rajam.

Pandits

Tamil: Sree S. Sivam (Vidwan Tamil).
Telugu: Sri P. Munirathnam (Vidwan Telugu & Sanskrit).
Hindi: Sri G. Srinivasan (Visharad).

Specialists

Sree L. Asirvatham (Nursery trained).
Art: Sri Prasanna Rao (Diploma, Shantiniketan).
Sree K. Kannamah (Handicrafts).
Music: Sri P. Balakrishnan, B.A. (Diploma, Vocal).
Sri N. C. Parthasarathy (Diploma, Violin).
Sri Venkatasamy Raju (Veena).
Miss. M. Salisbury, L.T.C.M. (Piano).
Dance: Sri Kamini Kumar Sinha. Sri Ramnath Kumar.
Office Secretary: Sri N. Sesha Ayyengar, B.A., L.T.
Librarian & Typist: Sri P. Ramamoorthy.
Doctor: Dr. V. T. Chari, M.B., B.S.
Nurse: Sree P. James.
Matron: Sree Amirtham Ammal.



VIDYODAYA TODAY—STAFF AND PUPILS OF 1949

MESSAGES

MINISTER FOR
EDUCATION

Fort St. George,
MADRAS.

Let me congratulate the Vidyodaya on its good work on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee celebrations. Educational institutions, especially of girls, have a great responsibility in the future. Women are the protectors of culture and our girls' institutions should become true representatives of our great culture. The motto of the School—Service and Sacrifice—truly represents our culture through the ages. I hope and pray that Vidyodaya will have a long era of useful service to the country and uphold these great ideals.

(Sd.) T. S. AVINASHILINGAM

VICE-CHANCELLOR,
ANDHRA UNIVERSITY

Maharanipeta P.O.,
Vizagapatam Dist.

My dear Mrs. Appasamy,

I am most happy to learn that the Vidyodaya has completed 25 years of its life and career and will soon be celebrating its Silver Jubilee. Until you, almost single handed, started this residential Girls' High School, there was nothing like it excepting in some of the European Convents. It was left to your sympathetic imagination to realise the need, importance and urgency for such an Institution; and to your indomitable courage and initiative to bring it into being, and organize it so well and on such fine lines. It is my good fortune that I could enroll myself amongst your friends and admirers. I also know of the very valuable work that your talented daughters have done and are doing.

No institution deserves to be greeted by our Presidency with greater gratitude and affection than yours and none deserves better support.

With my warmest regards,

Yours very sincerely,
(Sd.) C. R. REDDY.

SIR S. V. RAMAMURTY

Venkata Vilas
Cathedral Post, MADRAS.

On the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Vidyodaya, I write to express my appreciation of the service of love which Mrs. Appasamy has over a period of a quarter of a century rendered to the cause of children and country. She has shown grit and determination in overcoming many difficulties and deserves the sincere thanks of parents and citizens in Madras. Vidyodaya is one of the Girls' Schools in Madras which have given to the women of Madras a place equally with men in the development of social and intellectual, economic and political life of modern India, more so indeed, than in several other parts of India. This School too is a strand in the contribution which Christianity has made to the practical side of religion in India. I send my best wishes for its continued prosperity and success in its aims.

(Sd.) S. V. RAMAMURTY.

ICKWORTH
Bury St., Edmunds, Suffolk, ENGLAND.

I hope that the Vidyodaya School will have a successful Silver Jubilee in 1949. I well remember my visit to the School in 1938 and trust that a prosperous future lies ahead. I am well aware that education in the Madras Presidency is advancing by leaps and bounds and I wish the School all success in the future.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) ERSKINE.

(Lord Erskine, former Governor of Madras).

MAYOR HOUSE
Albury, Guildford, ENGLAND.

Please offer my warmest congratulations to Mrs. Appasamy and to the other members of the Committee on the fine record of the Vidyodaya Girls School during these 25 years and on the progress in new features and many activities shown by the last Report. May God bless Vidyodaya and all who work, teach and learn there is the wish of

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) MARJORIE PENTLAND.

(Lady Pentland, wife of former Governor of Madras).

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2 CRANBURNE COURT
Albert Bridge Road, LONDON S.W. 11.

I am glad to send a warm message of greeting to the Vidyodaya Girls' High School on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee, for I recall the happy afternoon I spent in your School when I was staying with Mahatma Gandhi in 1946, in Madras. On that visit I had the opportunity of seeing the valuable work being done and of talking with the students and staff.

The world of today, in which our youth will have to function, presents a baffling and bewildering picture to them. To face this situation, the most careful preparation is needed in their formative years-the kind of preparation for living as world citizens, that your Institution has always sought to provide. I wish you all success in this great task.

(Sd.) AGATHA HARRISON.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
BOMBAY.

I send you my very best wishes for this happy occasion. I am convinced that this Institution is rendering very fine service to the country in the kind of training it is providing for the children who attend it. May God bless all the work done there and may all its workers be filled with the spirit of our Master.

(Sd.) G. MAHARAJ SINGH.
wife of the Governor of Bombay.

BOMBAY.

I am very happy indeed to hear of your plans to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of your School. For, I have watched for years, though from a distance, with affectionate interest the good work done by your institution. May God, therefore bless it, its servers and its students with a vision of the truth of the soul and the soul of truth! May Vidyodaya ever grow in the service of their Vision!

(Sd.) GURDIAL MALLIK.
Ex-Professor,
Shanteniketan, BENGAL.

VILLA GUARDAMANGIA
PIETA, MALTA.

It is with great pleasure that I send my best wishes to Vidyodaya on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee. It is wonderful to think of what has been accomplished during the past twenty-five years but the pride of past achievements which must, at this moment, be in the hearts of all those who have worked so hard and contributed so greatly to their attainment, is I am sure equalled by their hopes for the future.

I share in these hopes and look forward to their fulfilment through the triumph of ever growing activities during another twenty-five years when continued progress will develop the already valuable teaching which is the basis upon which Vidyodaya has prepared so many girls to take their place in life and share in the responsibilities of their country in the years that lie ahead.

(Sd.) PAMELA MOUNTBATTEN
(Lady Pamela Mountbatten, daughter of Lord Mountbatten)

VISVA-BHARATI
Founder-President :
RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SANTINIKETAN
BENGAL

I am happy to know that the Vidyodaya School is soon going to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary and I hasten to send my hearty congratulations and best wishes to the Management, the staff and the students of the School. I know personally, with what devotion and zeal Mrs. E. S. Appasami has built up this noble temple of learning and it must be of great joy to her, in the evening of her life, to find the School to-day so securely established on a solid foundation. May she be long spared to carry on her great work with undimmed enthusiasm and unflagging persistence !

(Sd.) ANIL K. CHANDA
Principal, Sikshabhavana Visva-Bharati.

AVVAI HOME AND ORPHANAGE

Besant Avenue,
ADYAR.

I am indeed glad to have this opportunity of relating my experience of the work of Mrs. Appasamy. the founder of the Vidyodaya Girls' School. I had been serving on the Committee for s number of years, since its inception. Only a few years ago after the building was planned and put up, I resigned for reasons of health.

Mrs. Appasamy was a devoted and a sincere worker. She, along with her good husband, laboured hard to establish the Vidyodaya School on a permanent footing. Though the premature and sudden death of her husband cast a gloom over her life and though her children were young and needed her constant care, still she persisted courageously to continue the good work set on foot by herself in India and also went to England and America to collect funds for the school. Widowed and lonely as she was, she never lost hope and courage.

As I was intimately associated with her family. I can say there are very few women of her type in our land who can brave misfortunes with a faith and a hope which would only come to those devoted few children of God.

I wish her and the School a long and prosperous future. May her example inspire her sisters to walk in her foot-steps and benefit their country.

(Sd.) Dr. Mrs. S. MUTHULAKSHMI REDDI.

BOSTON

It gives me unusual pleasure to bear testimony to the splendid pioneer work done by Vidyodaya during the quarter century of its existence. Imbued with a keen desire to cultivate in children, and more especially in girls during their impressionable years, a wholesome devotion to the best in India's past tradition and culture, together with a desire to train children when they come of age to play their full part as citizens of their country and as home-builders, Vidyodaya has established a record far surpassing even the wildest dreams that one may have entertained for it at the time of its inception.

When others were afraid to try experiments in educational methods and curricula or were afraid to work out a wholesome blend between the best in the East and West, the founders of Vidyodaya exhibited a clarity of vision and strength of imagination which are now returning ample dividends. Vidyodaya has undoubtedly been a "a laboratory in social experimentation" and it is only right and proper that other educational and cultural institutions in the country should emulate its example.

EDDY ASIRVATHAM
Professor of Christian International Relations,
BOSTON UNIVERSITY,
(Formerly, Head of the Department of Politics
UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS)

35, Ferozshah Road,
NEW DELHI.

On the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Vidyodaya School I am very happy to send my warm greetings. I have watched with great interest the growth of the school from the very beginning. I can say without hesitation that the entire credit for the establishment and development of the institution goes to the untiring and enthusiastic efforts of Mrs. Appasamy.

Her whole idea in starting such a school was to give our children a new approach to education, with art and beauty as part and parcel of the school syllabus. I know of all the difficulties Mrs. Appasamy had to face for several years but her great courage and faith never allowed her to give up hope, and so Vidyodaya has attained the position it holds to-day as one of the most popular of Girl's Schools in our city.

While the school gives its students every opportunity of developing their natural artistic talents it does not in any way neglect those aspects of education which equip them to be full citizens of India.

On this First Jubilee, I send my very good wishes. May Vidyodaya be a shining example to all educational institutions and may it celebrate many more jubilees, in the years to come.

Jai Hind!

(Sd.) AMMU SWAMINATHAN.

Colpetty, COLOMBO.

I offer my congratulations to you and to Vidyodaya. It seems a very very long time ago I was in the school but I still cherish the memory of those days—in particular, I can never forget the lessons of social virtues, specially those of service and sacrifice, which were impressed upon us through precept and Mrs. Appasamy's personal example. Let me wish that Vidyodaya may grow more and more in usefulness and shine as a great centre for moulding and forming the mothers of a glorious future India.

V. C. PADMA
(Mrs. N. Ragavachari)
Old Student

MADRAS.

The few happy years that I spent in Vidyodaya as a teacher prompt me to wish the school all success on this great occasion. The very name Vidyodaya reminds one of Art, and you cannot work in that atmosphere of culture without imbibing some of it yourself. That has been my experience and I am sure of many others too. May this Jubilee give the incentive to the School to start a separate section for arts and crafts so as to afford an opportunity for many more to study the same.

(Sd.) R. RAJAMMAL.

THE STORY OF VIDYODAYA

The Idea.

MOST institutions begin as ideas in somebody's head. Vidyodaya was first thought of when its founder, Mrs. Appasamy (then Sornam Cornelius) was a pupil in the Epiphany Girls' School run by the Sisters of Wantage at Poona. Before she went to that school she had studied at many others, because her father was a Government servant who was frequently transferred from place to place. The ordinary schools of those days were poorly equipped and crowded and the kind of education they gave was scarcely a preparation for life. The Epiphany school was unusual because it catered for a small number of girls and gave them individual attention. So although Poona was a long way from Madras, Sornam Cornelius and her sisters spent several happy years at the Epiphany school. There they learned not only the usual subjects but how to dress, to entertain, to act plays, to cook, to mend and to help their juniors. It was an enjoyable as well as a useful training and Mrs. Appasamy when she left the school wished that such a school existed in South India. When she graduated from the Madras University some years later, she remembered the idea but could get no support to carry it any further. After her marriage, she visited England in 1914 and took the opportunity to see various good schools in that country and observed the kind of education for girls that was given there. On the return voyage in 1915, during the first world war, her ship narrowly escaped a torpedo. But ten more years were to pass before Vidyodaya was actually started.

It is not easy to open a private school, without Government assistance and without an endowment by some wealthy individual or community. Everyone agreed that a good girls' school, open to all communities and designed to train girls for leadership, was necessary. But it remained more a topic for conversation than for action. Worse still, the ninteen-twenties, like the present period, was a time of post-war inflation and political unrest. There was also a housing shortage. Nevertheless, Mrs. Appasamy secured some money from among her own relatives and also from sympathisers in Andhradesa, such as Maharaja of Pithapuram, the Rani of Tuni and others. With about Rs. 10,000 as donations, the school opened in a bungalow at Pallavaram on the 24th of February 1924 with three boarders and three day pupils.

The First Year.

Pallavaram is 14 miles from Madras City and 2½ miles from the sea. The climate is so much better than that of Madras that the Army built quarters for itself there a century ago. In 1924 the old military barracks were lying unused and the School Board thought they might get permission to occupy them.

The then Governor of Madras, Lord Willingdon himself inspected the buildings and recommended that they be handed over. But the Military Headquarters at Simla coolly replied that they would give "nothing for nothing and very little for six pence", and demanded an absurdly high rent for the buildings. The school authorities had therefore to content themselves with renting four bungalows, one for the Principal, Mrs. Sathianadhan, one for class rooms and two as dormitories for the children. The first head of the school, Mrs. Sathianadhan, was a remarkably talented lady. She had been the first woman graduate of the Madras University and the first M.A., and for many years she conducted a magazine for Indian ladies in English. It was she who chose the name "*Vidyodaya*".

The second term of the year 1924 brought more girls, 17 in all, 12 Christians 3 Hindus and 2 Muslims. From the very beginning the girls were taught Painting, Music, Domestic Science, Gardening and encouraged to take part in Social Service Work. It was even proposed to start a Baby Welfare Centre as an adjunct of the Social Service Work!

The school had a residential doctor, Miss. C. A. Philips, who taught First Aid, Hygiene and Drill. There were outdoor excursions and the girls were taken to Meenambakkam where the first radio station in the south was then operating.

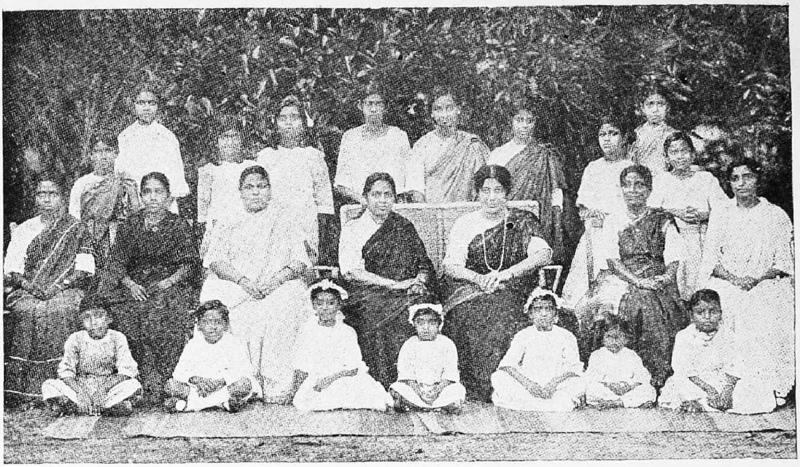
But the finances of the school were causing anxiety to the founder. Fortunately in March 1924 Mrs. Appasamy was sent as Y.W.C.A. delegate to Washington, U.S.A. and she was able to utilise the chance to get some American friends interested in the school. On her way back to India, she did the same in England and an English Committee was formed which promised to send a teacher to India and support her for five years.

On the Beach.

After two years it became fairly clear that Pallavaram was a little too remote to allow Vidyodaya to become a large institution. The number of pupils was still only 31. Meanwhile the school had been registered as a corporate body and was now seeking recognition of the Government as an aided school. The Director of Public Instruction told the School Board that this would be given only if the school put up a pucca building and obtained 40 subscribers who would pay Rs. 50 a year for running expenses. Finally in 1926, Vidyodaya was recognised as a special school by the Government and was officially "inspected" and reported upon.

It was in April 1926 that Vidyodaya moved to San Thome into a building rented from the Bishop of Madras. It was an old but roomy building once called the "Gordon Orphanage". It was on the beach, a fine play-ground for the children.

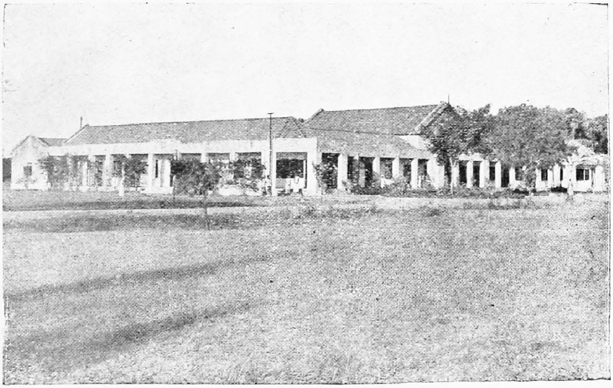
The Principal was now Miss. Kamala Cornelius. Miss. Hersey from England taught English music, Miss. Chacko taught History and Mr. Sambamoorthy (now Head of the Music Department of the University) taught Indian music. Mrs. Paul was matron and Miss. V. S. Kantayya



The staff and pupils at Pallavaram : 1924.

Vidyodaya at San Thome : 1926.

Rutland Gate, Nungambakkam : 1928—1938.



Vidyodaya School at Thyagarayanagar : 1938—1948.

was also on the staff. Some of the parents of the girls were by this time keen on their children appearing for the School Final, so Vidyodaya (somewhat reluctantly) decided to make the three uppers classes preparatory to the official examination. Meanwhile, Mrs. Appasamy was still on her travels in an attempt to raise more funds for the infant school, so that a permanent building could be erected. This time she toured Burma and Malaya and met with a friendly reception from Indians and Chinese settlers there. She came back with more than Rs. 10,000, much of it collected from Chinese merchants who had never been to Madras. It is remarkable that they helped so readily while wealthy persons in this Province showed no interest in a local institution.

Rutland Gate.

The transfer of Vidyodaya to the City brought more pupils but they were not numerous enough to solve the financial problem. Through all these early years of the school, an atmosphere of perpetual crisis existed and things came to a head again three years later when the San Thome premises were sold and the School was given notice to quit. The next shift was to Rutland Gate, Nungambakkam, a large private house with 20 acres of garden.

The Inspectress writing her first report of the school in its new quarters said, "This school, opened in 1924, has now established itself in the fine surroundings and open grounds of Rutland Gate, Nungambakkam. Under the able direction of Mrs. Appasamy, the foundations of a new type of institution have been laid. A feature of this school is the residential facilities afforded to children of all castes and creeds from all parts of the Presidency. . . . The responsiveness, joy and happiness of the children is a feature of the work. . . . . The institution, though recognised, has hitherto not been in receipt of financial aid from Government. It is strongly recommended that Government support this expression of indigenous effort so greatly needed in the interests of women's education in thePresidency."

Another trip of Mrs. Appasamy to the United States had resulted in another committee being formed to pay for an English teacher, the London Committee having been disbanded. The American Committee lasted two years and then foreign help ceased, except for a few individual donations. The lack of a permanent building was still the major problem before the School Board. Though the pupils now numbered nearly 100 and the staff fifteen (Miss. Rachel Jacob being the acting Headmistress), Rutland Gate had many defects. For a time the school authorities thought of buying seven acres of land in Rutland Gate compound and putting up a building there. But it was not till 1933 that negotiations were opened with the Corporation for the purchase of land in the new extension of Mambalam.

Let us now look at the activities of the school in the year 1930–31. The report for that year says that the vegetable garden was a great attraction. The girls gathered the vegetables on Saturdays and prepared

dishes which they proudly served to their teachers. The resident pupils were also doing cooking, washing mending and ironing on holidays. A scheme of Social Service for Nungambakkam Village was planned but later given up because of infectious diseases in the area, but the girls were trying to do something for the children of the school servants. A significant item was the arrival of one of the former students of the school after training in Tagore's dance school at Shantiniketan. This was probably the beginning of that interest in Indian Dancing which later made the dance dramas of Vidyodaya, so famous throughout Madras. Mr. Gopal Reddi in a speech referred to Vidyodaya as the Shantiniketam of South India. Rabindranath Tagore himself visited Vidyodaya in 1934 and spoke in appreciation of its work. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu also came the following year.

The sister art of Painting showed striking progress after 1939 with the arrival of Mr. Kiron Sinha, who got his art training in Shantiniketan and China. Since his time, the Children expressed themselves through painting and were not forced to draw according to the teacher's notions or models. He was followed by Mr. Susil Mukerji of the Madras Art School who organised the first Vidyodaya Art Exhibition in 1944. Mr. Prasanna, the present Art Master is from Shantiniketan too, and he also believes that children are natural artists who should be encouraged to express their individual vision in colour and line.

Rapid Growth.

The Sixth Form was opened at Vidyodaya in 1931 with the sanction of the Department of Public Instruction and two girls appeared in that year. The school has always shown very good results in public examination, a fact which parents are quick to appreciate. One reason for this was the strictness of the selection examination, another the high standard of English that has always existed in the school. When the school magazine "Pratyusha" was started in 1939, The 'Hindu' and 'Mail' reviews expressed surprise at the high quality of some of the work of the Children. A fourth form girl wrote, for example, these verses in a poem called, "The Changing World":

I look out of my window and see the sky, blue and ethereal,
The branches of the trees are tossing in the wind and laughing with glee,
Like children tossed in their mother's arms ; I laugh and I think.
"I am happy, for I was like that, young, free."

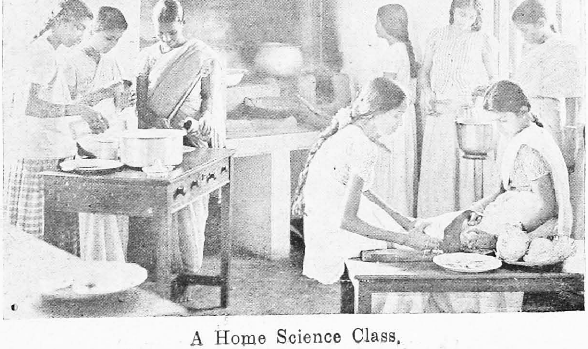
The school report for 1935 quotes an even more striking poem written after a visit to the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram :

" O Desolation, ruin, utter loneliness !
They have left thee, O my Lord The sea
Has washed thy courts uneven, and thy tanks :
Lie empty in the sun. The shifting sand
Drifts to thy pillared porch. The sacred bulls
Lie battered by the silent waves of Time.

The School Orchestra at San Thome.

DANCE DRAMA.
(A Scene from Savitri and Satyavan).

A song at an Anniversary Function in the Mango Grove.



A Home Science Class.

I stand before Thee, silent wondering. .
The sacred linga gone. . no temple bells
Call unto thee, no betel, sandal-paste or flower,
No offering of oil or camphor...... silent, dim,
A world apart, this silent shrine....
And through thine open portal, raging free,
The sea its mad defiance ever flings."

The number of pupils rose from year to year and several able teachers joined the staff. In 1933, Miss. Rachel Jacob who had been Headmistress went away on leave and Miss. T. P. Jayanthi took her place. Mr. Venkatarama Iyer became teacher of Mathematics and by his patient hard work improved the standard in that subject immensely till his premature death in 1946. Mr. Varadachari took charge of the Science Department and Chemistry is now a popular optional. Mrs. Kannamma replaced Miss Jean Duncan at Handwork. It was in this year that Miss. Vimala Appasamy finished her studies in America and England and came to teach the Kindergarten classes, replacing Miss. Muthayya. Miss Appasamy, even before she became Headmistress in 1936, introduced certain innovations which soon became permanent fea tures of the school life and added to its activities the Beauty Corner (by which each class is given a chance to decorate with some object of art), daily fifteen minute talks: the Honour Roll, the Flower Festival, the Christmas entertainment and gifts to the servants and the Candle Light Service.

It was about this time, however that the school lost one of its best advisers and guides, Mr. Paul Appasamy, who had from the beginning encouraged Mrs. Appasamy and helped her in a hundred ways to organise the school. He passed away in September 1933. Later, the staff and pupils presented Vidyodaya with his portrait which was unveiled by Sir David Devadoss, an old friend of his. It was indeed a pity that he did not live to see the school established in its permanent home in Mambalam.

A Home at Last.

The Corporation of Madras had been generous to sell nearly thirteen acres of land to the school at cost price as early as 1932 but it took several years more before the present buildings could be raised on the site. The foundation stone was laid on 11th March 1938 by Dr. Subbaroyan, the Education Minister in the first Congress Ministry. The Prime Minister, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari was himself present on the occasion and another interested visitor was Sir Venkatasubba Rao. The girls laid the stones of the four Houses, Premalaya, Sathyalaya, Sevalaya and Thyagalaya with their mottœs in the main hall with impressive ceremony. The school authorities had asked for Government assistance for the building expenses and Dr. Subbaroyan confirmed that this would be given.

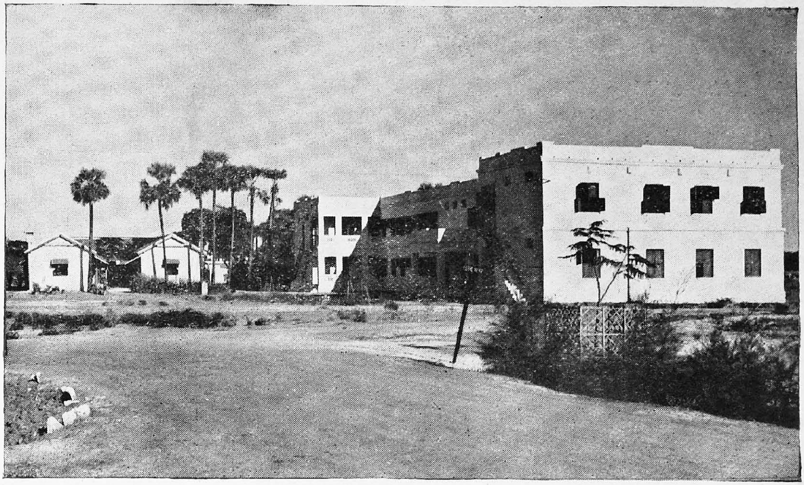
The buildings were got ready by July (though still incomplete) thanks to the energy of Mr. Rajabadar Mudaliar, the contractor and the engineer, Mr. Hensman, and Rev. P. Asirvatham who supervised the work with tireless energy and made himself trusted and respected by the

workmen. That a school like Vidyodaya was needed in Mambalam was shown at once in the fact that the number of pupils rose from 130 to 210. Lord Erskine, the Governor of Madras, formally opened the school on 8th November 1938. Lady Marjorie Erskine lighted the lamp of learning, an ornamental Kuthu Vilakku, and a prayer and a hymn consecrated the occasion. Mrs. Appasamy expressed her gratitude to the many generous patrons of the school who had come to its rescue financially. She mentioned Mrs. Murdoch and Mrs. Huntington of America, the late Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, the N. M. Wadia Charities, the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mrs. Kamala Rangachari (widow of the famous doctor) and Mr. M. D. Soundararajan. The pupils and teachers, past and present, had themselves raised a sum of Rs. 6,500.

Declaring the buildings open, the Governor said, "This evening's function marks the opening of a fresh stage in the career of Vidyodaya School, by the inauguration of its first permanent home. It cannot be denied that the school has achieved a memorable success, in having reached, from such small beginnings, and during little more than a decade, a stage at which it has been able to secure so many pupils and to attract the generosity of so many friends, to a degree that has made it possible to erect these new buildings: a fitting home for the children who attend so eminently progressive a school. A complicated sentence but expressive of the truth! It may not be entirely out of place to point out here that when the school was completed, the cost came to nearly a lakh of rupees (Rs. 91,706–5–0), and that it was some time before the bill was fully paid. The School was still cramped for space and in 1940 an additional building to house the Science Laboratory and the Kindergarten section had to be put up. About the same time Mr. T. Rama Reddi generously built a Lunch Hall for the day scholars. Through the effort of the teachers and pupils a special kitchen was attached to the Lunch Hall for Domestic Science.

War Scare.

By June 1941 there were more pupils clamouring for admission than it was possible to take and work went forward with a swing. By January the next year, the pupils began to drop in number because of the rumours of Japanese invasion. The Director of Public Instruction sent word that examinations for the High School should be held at once. This was done and the pupils were free to go home by the end of February. By March 5 not a single girl remained but the teachers still came every day to sit in the empty class rooms. When the term ended it looked as if there was no chance of reopening in Madras because the scare was worse than ever. During the summer, parents got a letter from the Headmistress saying that she had secured a large building in Palmaner, Chittoor District, and asking whether they would like to send their children there. Meanwhile, several of the teachers resigned. The outlook grew dark. Fortunately when Vidyodaya reopened at the end of June more than 200 pupils came back and all classes were resumed. The war



Vidyodaya Hostel and Dining Halls.

Governor and Lady Erskine at the opening ceremony : Nov, 8, 1938.

Lighting the Lamp of Learning at the opening ceremony.

Proposed block for Art, Music, Dance and Craft work.

danger gradually receded, though there was a different kind of convulsion when the Congress movement for full independence was launched in August.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

The school report for 1947 records the celebration of Independence Day when trees were planted and a procession of girls went round the compound singing. During the year, the Nursery section was opened for children between 3–5 years of age, with Miss. L. Asirvatham in charge.

The classes have now become very popular and the number of children has greatly increased. The Nursery classes are regarded as very important in modern educational practice because at a very early stage the child learns to handle toys and play creatively as well as to co-operate with other children in a natural manner. There is no formal teaching in these classes except for songs and rhymes and the 'Play way' is almost exclusively used to rouse the interests of the growing child.

In 1947, however, some of the lower classes of the school lost pupils because of the new order that these classes should adopt the vernacular medium. Vidyodaya had drawn its children from all parts of the Presidency and even from abroad, from places like Burma and Malaya. A number of children therefore had to go when Tamil became the language of instruction. Permission to retain English was given for the higher classes, Form II—Form VI and here there was an accession of strength which partly counter-balanced the loss in the other groups. The same high standards were kept, with the result that in 1947, 12 of the 13 candidates for S.S.L.C. secured passes.

The school authorities are now anxious to prepare the ground for the special courses in Art, Music, Domestic Science and Handi-crafts which Vidyodaya will have to offer when the scheme for bifurcated studies comes into force. As a temporary expedient, Nissen sheds have been bought to provide space for the teaching of Botany and Music. But if the new courses are to be properly given, a new building is absolutely necessary. Even now there are 63 pupils learning Dance and the Music classes are also large. The present accommodation is not enough. For the Art classes a studio with proper lighting equipment is wanted. Vidyodaya is also anxious to expand the Handicraft section to include spinning, weaving, pottery and leather work. A plan has been drawn up for a separate Art Block which will give space for Music, Dance, Art and Handicrafts while courses in Domestic Science and Home Craft including Civics, Child Psychology, Nursing and Dietetics should be taught in special cottages where two or three little children will be looked after by older girls. The estimated cost of this plan is Rs. 1,35,000. As Vidyodaya enters upon its Silver Jubilee Year it is hoped that its past record of uninterrupted expansion and growing service will be maintained, and that it will continue to cater for the needs of an even larger number of our country's daughters.

VIDYODAYA AT WORK

HIGH SCHOOL.

WHEN the school was first established in 1924 the pupils were prepared for the Junior and Senior Cambridge examinations.

Two years later a Middle school department Forms I—III was started on the suggestion of the Inspectress, Mrs. Henderson. In those days the total strength in the three classes was only fifteen. This gave teachers a chance to give more individual attention, and excursions and parties were easier to arrange than they are now when there are 37 pupils in Form III alone and the whole strength is eighty. While the subjects that are taught in the middle school are the usual ones, at Vidyodaya special care is taken to teach them in a living way and full use is made of the Library with its growing collection of good books and encyclopaedias and an interesting collection of illustrations, pictures, diagrams and other equipment.

In 1929 six girls were admitted into Fourth Form. Thereafter the first set of girls, who were two in number, were sent up for the S.S.L.C. examination in 1932. Gradually the number increased and in 1948, fifteen girls, the largest group so far, were sent up for the examination. All passed creditably, and this year we hope to send nineteen girls. The results in the public examinations have shown a very high percentage of successes as we have had cent per cent results for seven years out of the seventeen years in which candidates have appeared.

In the beginning, Botany and Indian Music were the optional subjects. Indian Music was emphasized even then. In 1933 Mathematics was also introduced, Chemistry in 1935, History and Physiology in 1937 and Indian Music was reintroduced in 1947 after a lapse of nineteen years. These various optionals fit the girls for the different types of study they pursue after their school course. The School also awards the Paul Appasamy Memorial Medal each year to the most talented girl in Form VI who has rendered service to the school.

Medallists of the School.

1934. Susy Chandy.
1935. Esther Appasamy.
1937. Sarojini Devanesan.
1938. C. K. Subhapradha.
1939. N. Lalitha.
1940. V. K. Venkataramana.
1941. C. Bhanumathy.
1942. T. Kamala.
1943. Mary Kurien.
1944. Vasanthi Asirvatham.
1945. Mary Edna Kuriyan.
1946. P. Lakshmi.
1947. Shanthi Rajarathnam.
1948. N. Shanthi.

Even before the reorganization scheme the school has been emphasizing subjects like Domestic Science, Drawing, Painting, Handwork, Needlework, games and music, both Western and Indian. The art and craft work of the children are often

sent to exhibitions in Madras. Recently there have been calls for paintings from our School to be exhibited in the U.N.O. Educational and Cultural Exhibition and the Children's Art Exhibition in London. In 1939 G. Subadra's carpet design was commended at the World Children's Art Exhibition held in Madras. Lady Hope opened the Children's Art Exhibition in the school in 1944 when more than a hundred pictures and other works of art by pupils of all classes were on view. Several of these pictures were commended by art critics as outstanding achievements for youthful talent. P. Shantha's Concentration Camp was interesting because of the topic, Hesitation by Shakuntala Singh for its remarkable composition and colour scheme, Winding River by V. Karthyani showed good draftsmanship and vigorous handling and Along the Canal by Sita Das was commended for its decorative effect.

Sometimes each class room is turned into an exhibition hall and the good paintings of that class are exhibited. Children are often invited to broadcast a musical programme. They sometimes have singing competitions between the four houses and are sometimes taken to hear good singers and orchestral concerts.

In the mornings before the classes begin, for fifteen minutes the teachers give short talks on the following subjects :—Character, Art, Science, Current Events and Music. The outlook of the children is greatly widened by inviting outstanding personalities. Rabindranath Tagore, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Rameshwari Nehru visited our School. From foreign countries Dr. Kagawa (Japan), Mr. Stanley Jones (America), Agatha Harrison (England), E. Salter Davies, Director of Education, England, Amy Bevet from Switzerland, E. E. Holden from Durban, South Africa, H. T. Tsin from China, Professor Hocking of America, and Lady Pamela Mountbatten were among those entertained by the school. This tends to promote a healthy international feeling in the children. They are often taken out to hear important and distinguished speakers like Jawaharlal Nehru. While Mahatma Gandhi was here in Madras our children had an opportunity to see him and some of them had the special privilege of singing at his prayer meeting.

The High School has a separate Literary and Debating Society both English and Vernacular in which they are trained to think clearly and talk before an audience. Outside speakers are also invited on some days. This year the Tamil Literary Society undertook to celebrate Thiruvalluvar Day and Bharathiar Day when distinguished speakers were invited. The English Literary Society broadcast a discussion on the topic "Cottage Industries or Factories". As an organ of this Society we have our magazine "Pratyusha" which was started in 1938 and is edited by the Children's Magazine Committee. Children also correspond with foreign friends and exchange stamps and pictures. It was through this hobby that Lady Pamela Mountbatten happened to visit our School and give us an exciting day. Many girls have

written essays for the National Health Essay Competition and the S.P.C.A. Essay Competition and received prizes. Often they send their handwork and art work to the Inter-School Exhibitions held by the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. and receive certificates. On some occasions they have taken part in elocution and oratorical competitions.

For the past five years the children have been working hard to raise Rs. 5,000 so that they could present the School with money for a room in the Home Science Cottage for its Silver Jubilee. By running a fun fair, fete and variety entertainments nearly Rs. 4,000 has been collected so far. Through the fete this year they hope to get the rest. Even after the girls leave school they try to keep in touch with the school through the Old Student's Association, started in 1935 by Miss Jacob.

Much attention is paid to games for which there is a committee. We have been able to have the help of Physical Instructress only for two years. But whenever the children have taken part in inter-school sports and matches they have acquitted themselves creditably. Every year the inter-class or house matches culminate in a Sports Day when the various teams receive the trophies, cups and shields they have won.

The Primary Department.

In spite of the many handicaps that the school had, especially regarding finance, it has tried its best to carry out its ideals. The syllabus was so graded as to enable the children to have a fairly good knowledge of all important subjects such as Arithmetic, English, (which was then the medium of instruction in the school), History, Geography, Hygiene and Nature Study, Art, Craft and Music. The purpose of imparting knowledge in these subjects in the primary school was to help children who had to discontinue their studies in the lower classes for various reasons, to be useful at home.

More stress was laid on the practical work of these subjects than a mere bookish knowledge and cramming of facts. They had very little written work. Till Class V they were taught to write in script, special emphasis was laid on the improvement of handwriting in the primary classes, for which separate periods were allotted in a week.

When the School was in 'Rutland Gate', Nungambakkam, in 1935, there was a thorough change in the syllabus which was graded to develop the child's mind from the known to the unknown. From Kindergarten to Class II everything was taught through play—through action songs, clay modelling, drawing simple sketches to express ideas, paper cutting, and doing simple handwork in connection with the short stories that they learnt.

From Class III to Class V they were prepared for the Middle School work—learning History and Geography, elementary Nature study and Hygiene, doing more practical work. They start written work, writing short answers to questions asked. Excursions, discussion classes

SCIENCE APPLIED TO HOME LIFE

COOKING CLASS

★

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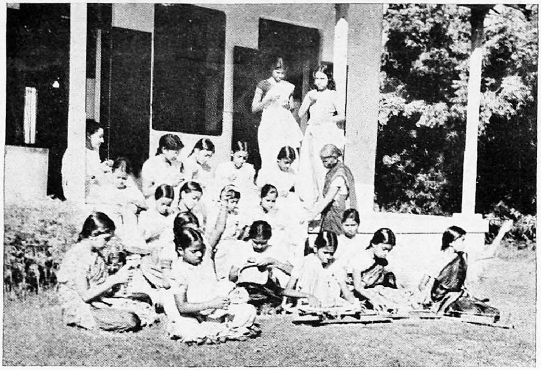
MOTHER CRAFT



A GROUP AT HAND-WORK

SENIORS PLAYING NET BALL

Blocks by Klein & Peyerl

and dramatizations are planned in connection with all the subjects taught.

When the school moved to its own building at T' Nagar, its Primary Department was planned on quite a different model from the Middle and the High School.

From Kindergarten up to Class V they have half an hour periods for all the subjects excepting Arithmetic and Tamil for which 40 minutes are allotted, as the children cannot concentrate for long periods like the children in the Forms. The classes have their bell rung at the end of every half an hour and the forms every 40 minutes.

Classes III to V do interesting projects in connection with their History and Geography lessons. For instance, the projects on the Post Office and Life in a Village were carried on for weeks by certain classes.

Drawing, Handwork and Music are taught from the lower class in order to cultivate the power of appreciating art, beauty and order in everything. For encouragement, special prizes are given every year to the best child in the class in drawing and handwork. They are encouraged to send their exhibits to the art exhibitions and many children in the lower classes have won prizes and certificates of merit for them. Small museum shelves are supplied to each class to preserve specimens and other interesting collection in connection with their nature study lessons.

Two study periods of half an hour each have been provided on the Time Table for the classes during which time they are asked to finish all their unfinished work such as dictation corrections, arithmetic corrections, copy writing, completion of drawings and illustrations. These study periods are of great use to them as they are able to finish most of their school work at that time. At the end of the study periods their exercise books are collected and left in the class book-shelf and this prevents them from tearing or carelessly throwing about the exercise books while taking them home with them daily. After examinations, the books are collected from the children before the holidays and left in the book shelf again for safe custody. At the end of each term, the books are sent home through the children to the parents to be signed by them, and thus the parents are informed of the nature of the work done at school by their children, apart from the monthly progress reports.

Moral instruction classes are not omitted on the Time Table as they are absolutely essential to mould character. Two moral instruction classes are provided in a week for them. One moral instruction class they have with their respective teachers in their class rooms, and for the other all the five classes meet in the school hall and the teachers in turn conduct these assemblies by telling them interesting moral stories and teaching them little hymns and prayers. Once a term each class is encouraged to conduct the Assembly to the other classes in its own way for which interesting items are got up by them. They dramatize moral stories which gives them ample scope

to improve their language, and power of expression.

Three flower festivals were held at school by the lower classes. A day is chosen by the classes for this celebration when varieties of flowers of different colours are brought by them. Each form helps a class in the decoration of the class rooms with the type of flower and foliage they prefer and thus the whole day is spent in the decoration, ending in the evening with a short entertainment to the whole school. The programme consists of a hymn on God in Nature, a reading by the children themselves on Nature and a few items by themselves. Once they enacted a play called the 'Blue Bell', and, one of Rabindranath Tagore's Poems called 'The Flower School.'

After the introduction of the house system in the school, the houses joined the classes on these occasions. Little invitations in the shape of leaves, were sent to the parents by the classes inviting them to partake in the jubilation. Thus these occasions afforded them a good training in colour scheme and harmony.

Another group activity the lower classes enjoyed thoroughly year by year is the getting up of Christmas entertainments during the season. To this they invite the Middle and the High school with the staff and a few outsiders.

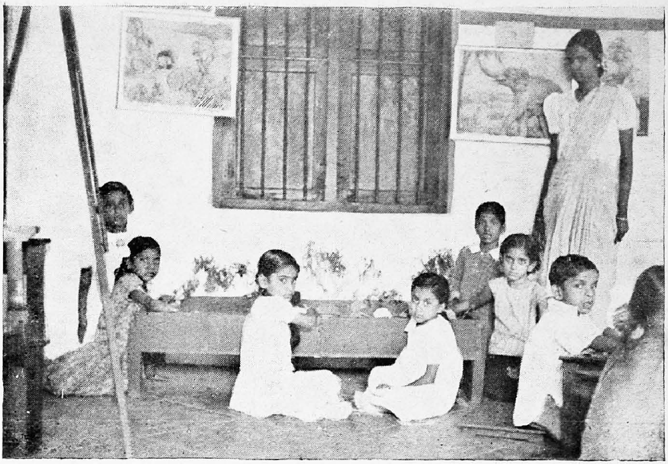
On one occasion the children decorated a 'X'mas tree with useful little presents and invited the Avvai Home to their entertainment and distributed the presents to the orphans.

On another occasion the parents were invited and the children proudly presented them with gifts they had made for them in the Handwork classes.

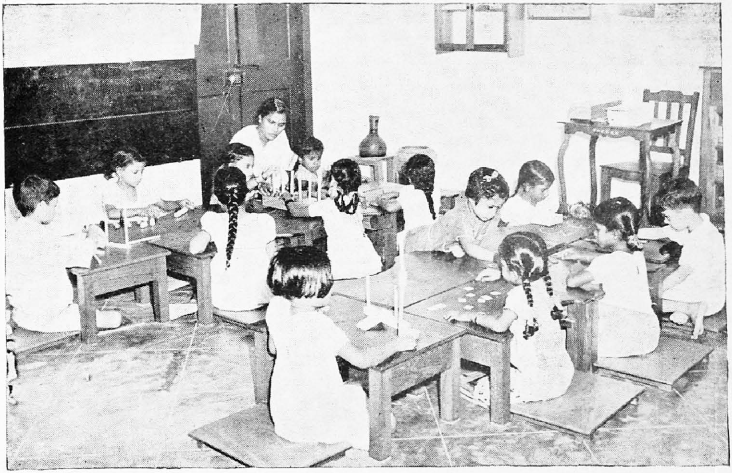
For the past two or three years the strength in the lower classes has been steadily increasing but this does not in any way hinder the enthusiasm and group activity of the children. They go on with their usual routine of lessons, projects, their own separate class periods, and morning and evening worship. Now that the medium of instruction in the lower classes has been changed to Tamil, classes from Kindergarten to Class II have separate assembly both in the morning and evening with their class teachers, and Class III upwards, as they belong to the houses, have it with the Middle and High School.

Kindergarten.

In 1935 Class I consisted of a small group of pupils and the syllabus followed was very meagre in subject matter for the intelligent and capable children in all the first five classes. As many of the girls left the School very young to start homes of their own with little opportunity to add to their knowledge, the whole syllabus of the lower school was revised to challenge the interest of the growing minds of the pupils. The teachers aimed at giving them a strong foundation which would stand them in good stead for life during the few years at their disposal. Lessons in History, Geography, Nature Study and Hygiene were not to be a mere relation of facts or stories but were lived through



SAND TRAY MODELLING—CLASS I



KINDERGARTEN

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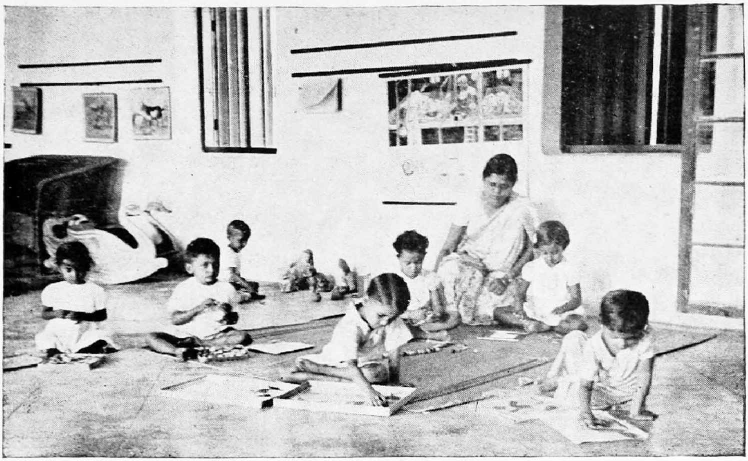


THE NURSERY

THE NURSERY PLAY HOUR

when the pupils expressed what they acquired either through colourful illustration, models, dramatization or project work. A new time table with shorter periods to suit the capacity of active children was provided with ample scope for variety. As the medium of instruction was English, parents who were anxious to give their children a fair chance to acquire the language sent them early to school and the first class which was designed for six year olds grew to thirtyfive in number with four or five year old children. Thus a new class had to be formed as there was a vast difference between the ability of the children aged four to six. The Kindergarten came into existence.

From the start the pupils together with training in the three R's received instruction through conversation on health habits and Nature Study. Their programme for the day was varied with periods of learning, activity and rest as every day there was an opportunity for singing, games and an hour's nap in the afternoon. Handwork, Drawing and Colour Work, Gardening and group activity engrossed their attention when the day's number and language work both in English and the mother tongue were over. Indeed the children made such progress under the new system that by 1939 another section for younger pupils was opened and the two K.G's. buzzed with activity. The primary pupils who had attended morning worship with older students now had an assembly of their own. Besides this, twice a week separate periods for moral instruction provided opportunities to learn and to live, work and play happily with others. Excursions, picnics and parties were arranged for them and in return they tried to entertain their older sisters in the upper school once a year at Christmas time.

In 1947 with the sudden order from Government that the medium of instruction should be Tamil the non-Tamilians like the Gujarathis, Bengalis, Punjabis, Marathas and Malayalees were forced to leave the school. With it Vidyodaya lost the cosmopolitan life and the joyous intercommunal aspect of school which had been one of the unique features of even the Kindergarten. It was amazing how quickly children acquired English when they could share their thoughts through a common medium. More of the language was learnt in their intercourse with one another than when taught by the direct method. If Hindi could replace English, children would acquire it with equal facility when they mingle with Hindi speaking companions. Though the enforced change in the medium of instruction resulted in the disappearance of one section of the Kindergarten it gave room for the development of our Nursery which is a new venture of faith.

Our Nursery.

The idea of a nursery section for our school originated from some of our students in the higher classes. They wanted to bring their little brothers and sisters to school. Some parents too were anxious that their little ones should learn early to play

and share their joy with other children of their own age and get into the habit of going to school happily and with enthusiasm. So in June 1947 a small nursery class was started for children below five years of age. For the long term, from June to December, there were six children in the class, four boys and two girls.

Arrangements have been made for the children to play both indoors and out in the open, in the shade under the trees. A large number of toys, big and small, in various colours, have been collected for their play. Children can never keep still. They love movement, the more rhythmic the better. They have been given a riding-horse, rocking-swan, tricycle and a swing. They have dolls to play with, and small domestic utensils with which they make-believe at keeping house. They are also given beads in many colours, building blocks and pictures. Unconsciously so to say, playing they learn to differentiate colours, count, build and recognise pictures. Of course, next best in their choice, comes stories. We tell them stories to their hearts content and they listen with open-mouth, wide-eyed, living every minute of it. Songs and rhymes to train their lisping tongues, riddles and puns to keep them alert and amused, are provided in plenty.

Children cannot go from breakfast to lunch without a snack in between; so all the children are given light refreshment at 11 o'clock every day. The opportunity is used to teach them to wash their hands, use their own plates and mugs marked with a particular symbol, and to eat and drink neatly. They usually have biscuits and cocoa, occasionally lime juice. We also set apart a whole hour for rest. The children are put to sleep and even if some are unable to fall asleep, they are kept quietly resting.

In December before we closed for Christmas, the children had a "Christmas Tree" in the nursery class. The parents of the children were also present and it turned out to be quite an enjoyable function.

In January 1948 two new children joined. The little group received apparatus such as a beautifully coloured wooden pyramid, Mak-A-Toy, and picture books, etc., presented by Mrs. Wells and Miss. Vasanthi Asirvadham, an old student of the school. A gift of Percussion Band instruments from Camp Aloha has enabled the little ones to enjoy rhythmic training along with the older children of the school. Action songs form a part of their daily routine, besides exercises in manipulative skill and organized games.

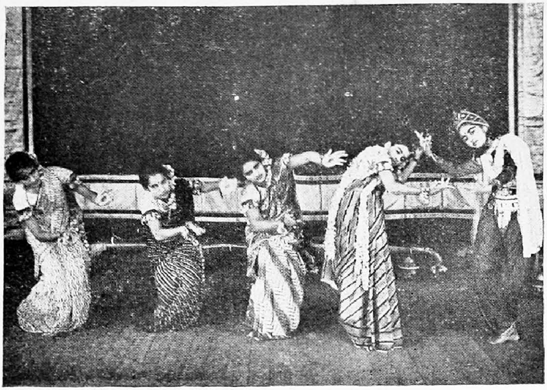
At the end of the academic year, in April, just before the school closed for summer vacation all the children were sent to the Kindergarten except one who is still under-age.

Though the nursery was started originally as an experimental venture, it has since been decided to continue this section for children between 3–5 years of age. By July 1948 the strength of the section was fourteen.

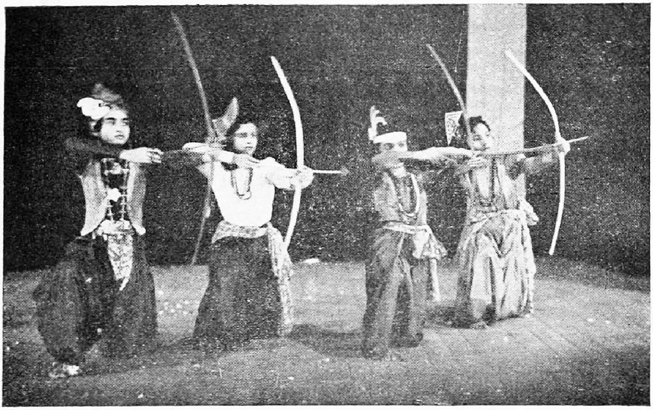
A Nissen shed in the Mango tope is being constructed to house our nursery and we shall soon be moving into it. We hope to have a separate

THE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

THE BABYS' BAND



SCENES FROM KALIDASA'S "SAKUNTALA"
(DANCE DRAMA)



playground for the children with a small garden. Soon the strength of this department, it is expected, will rise to twenty and we shall then be getting a trained assistant to help the teacher-in-charge. We hope to introduce many improvements and make our nursery section not only the most important but the most progressive feature of our school.

MUSIC–DRAMA–DANCE.

In the early years, European music predominated in Vidyodaya and was taught by experts from England such as Miss. Dorothy Hersey (Violin and Piano) and Miss. Dickinson (Piano and Cello). They organised an orchestra and a Babies Band and pupils were sent up for the examinations of the Trinity College of Music. But there was excellent tuition in Indian music also, both instrumental and vocal, under Mr. Sambamoorthy, who is now head of the University Department of Music.

Today both kinds of music instruction are still given. An Indian music orchestra was formed a few years ago by Miss. Jacob and takes part in all the school functions. Optional Indian music was introduced in Form V and VI as early as 1930. There are now three highly qualified teachers, Mr. N. C. Parthasarathy (Veena and Violin), Mr. P. Balakrishnan (Vocal) and Mr. Venkatasamy Raju (Veena and Gottuvadhyam). Western music was taught by Miss. Coralie Taylor for many years and she trained the children to give operettas, sung in English, such as "The Moon Queen" and "Zurika". The girls were often asked by the A.I.R. to sing over the radio. The teacher is now Miss. Salisbury and from the Nursery class to the highest class, the girls get an opportunity of learning Western as well as Indian songs. The first attempts at Indian Dancing started in 1930 and the teachers composed original dances to certain simple Indian tunes. In 1931 Miss. R. Muthuvelu, an old student, joined Vidyodaya after a period of training in Tagore's institution at Santiniketan, and she greatly improved the dance technique and stimulated the interest of the girls in group dances. In 1936 Miss. Paulickapulle and Mr. Kamini Kumar Sinha, both trained dancers from Santiniketan, joined Vidyodaya and introduced the Manipuri folk dances. They created so much enthusiasm that the whole school began to learn dance movements, the older girls teaching the younger under the trees at Rutland Gate.

A series of excellent dance-dramas directed by Miss. Jacob and given at the Museum Theatre during the last ten years always drew large public audiences. In 1937 there was "The Lady from Cloudland". In 1939 Tagore's "Chitra" proved so popular that the girls gave performances in Salem and Coimbatore as well as in Madras.

In 1940 and 1941 the drama was Tagore's 'Shap Mochan', 1942 was Kalidasa's 'Sakuntala', 1943 'Savithri and Satyavan', 1944 Kalidasa's 'Vikramorvasiyam', 1946 'Sunderabai and Bir-sing'. The dances were arranged by Mr. Kamini Kumar Sinha, the costumes by Miss. Jacob and the music by the music teachers.

Besides the dance dramas there is usually a variety entertainment in the School hall in September to collect funds for charitable purposes as well as a variety programme for the School Prize distribution in March. Vidyodaya girls are asked to give special items at various entertainments in the city and they have given performances for distinguished visitors, like Tagore and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, as well as at school ceremonies. These functions usually terminate with the mass singing of Tagore's National Anthem, which has been sung at Vidyodaya since 1925.

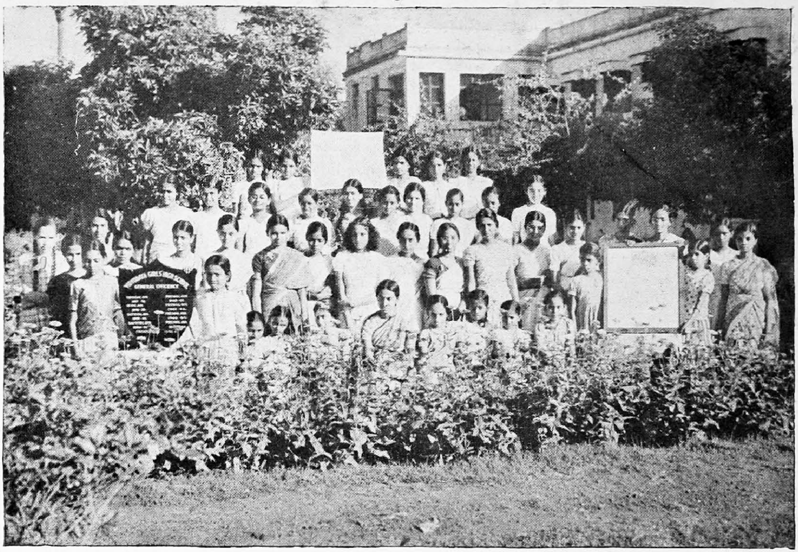
Training in Leadership.

A school like Vidyodaya which was to provide a unique type of education suited to the genius and talents of Indian girls could not but make use of the opportunity to give the pupils an adequate training in citizenship. So from the start in 1924 the school has sought to cater for the all round development of the pupil by encouraging originality, initiative and leadership.

During the second term of its existence the student body of Vidyodaya consisted of twelve Christians, three Hindus and two Muslims. Sharing a common life of work and play knocked off sharp-cornered prejudices and enabled the girls to appreciate each other and respect the customs of others. Daily duties were assigned to each and these were discharged with the love and consideration found in a family. The older girls adopted little sisters for whom they were responsible. In order to learn to serve others the older pupils were encouraged to visit a Cheri in Pallavaram where they taught Hymns, Games and Tamil to the children. They evinced such sustained interest in the Social Service work that even the starting of a Baby Welfare Centre was proposed. Pupils were also given an opportunity to develop their histrionic talents.

It was not till 1930, however, that an organized effort was made when Miss. R. Jacob formed a school committee with Thangam Bretherton elected as the first Senior Student. The members of the committee and the Senior student were entrusted with duties in the school and hostel. When the school moved to Nungambakkam the Social Service work was continued in the servant quarters where groups of pupil volunteers taught Hygiene, Needle-work, Tamil and Games to the School servants and their children. In 1931–32 the children were given more responsibilities. The Dramatic and Music Committee was in charge of items for School functions, the Games Committee helped the teachers with daily games and drill periods and arranged for inter-class sports. The Literary Society attempted the production of a magazine in manuscript.

In 1936, Self-Government through the House system was introduced. Pupils from Class III to Form VI are members of the four Houses, Premalaya, Sathyalaya, Sevalaya, and Thyagalaya. After a solemn but beautiful investiture ceremony when the elected senior student and the heads and perfects of the houses receive their badges of office,



THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF PREMALAYA : 1949

THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF SEVALAYA : 1949

CHILDREN LINE UP FOR STATIONERY

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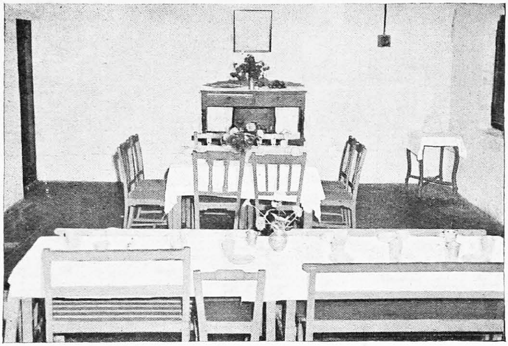


DINING ROOM IN THE HOSTEL

GRANDCHILDREN
FOUR PUPILS WHOSE MOTHERS ARE OLD STUDENTS

Blocks by Klein & Peyerl

a committee is formed with four advisory staff members to undertake the discipline of the School and to share the various duties. Each house has its own colours, emblem and motto, an order of worship and an Honour Roll wherein stars are assigned to those who excel in studies and extra-curricular activities. A record of their achievements, of bad or good behaviour, is thus maintained and at the end of the year a Shield of Efficiency is awarded to the best house. Every year in July the newly admitted pupils are initiated as members of the Houses at the impressive Candle Light Ceremony when each lights her candle from the candle of the Founder, and marches to take a place on the outline of India signifying the passing on of the light gained at School. The General Assembly of house members meet once a month to deal with problems of community welfare or to prepare for school events and functions. The Dramatic Committee, the Games Committee and the Literary Society, Senior and Junior, carry on their activities within the house system. By means of festivals, ceremonies, the Beauty Corner and excursions, the pupils are given ample opportunities of gaining experience in management and co-operative effort. Their knowledge is widened by cultural talks every morning and visits of outstanding personalities and people from other countries. They have frequently raised money through fetes and concerts for appeals from Relief Organisations, the Red Cross Society, the Teachers Benevolent Fund, the Seva Sangham, the Tuberculosis Fund and Memorial Funds. The staff and pupils have instituted a Servants Benevolent Fund and a Community Chest in the School to render financial help for urgent appeals.

Though the Purva Vidyarthini Sangham (O.S.A.) was started only in 1935, it is with pride that we look back on the old students who have served successfully in different spheres of life as useful members of society. S. V. Saraswathy was an Honorary Magistrate in Madras and rendered meritorious service in the Naval Department during the war years. So did Rukku Srinivasan as a Naval Commissioner. Several of our students, A. Chitra, A. Sarojini, M. Shanta, C. Lalitha, S. R. Padmavathy and K. Padma have undertaken a life of service through the medical profession. Among those who have graduated with distinctions are Veda Devadoss, Esther Appasamy, Sarojini Devanesan, A. Krishnabai and C. K. Subapradha, while G. Mythili Ayesha Mahomed, A. Rajalakshmi, R. Kamala, A. Sivagamu, K. P. Leelavathy, T. Kamala and K. Santha are among the graduates Vidyodaya has produced. Sakuntala Devanesan and Vasanthi Asirvatham obtained their degrees in foreign universities. Since her graduation, Esther Appasamy completed her Art Diploma at Santiniketan after which the Government of India have sent her as one of their scholars to study art in China. Rukku Srinivasan has taken her family to England where her two children attend school and J. Sharada has set up a home of her own in Uganda, Africa. Many others have set up happy homes of their own which

after all is the real service which all women are called to render. The four grandchildren we have in school and many others testify to the verse from Isaiah, Ch. 60, which is the corner stone of Vidyodaya : " Arise, shine, for the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee ".

The Hostel

Leaving home, where in all probability she commanded all comfort and attention, and learning to live among many of her type is, perhaps, the greatest adjustment a girl is called upon to make in her early life. The change from home to hostel is apt to descend too severely on her and dwarf and depress her spirits. It is felt that the only remedy for this is to maintain as much of the spirit of the home as is possible in the hostel. In order to make this practical, the strength of this hostel has always been kept down to near 60, though many more seek admission.

The presence of tots of five and six helps to lend the place the true touch of home. Also, it gives the senior girls training in looking after them. Each little girl has a big sister in the hostel to whom she can freely turn for help and guidance in her troubles. As a rule the sisters get very attached to each other. The little ones sleep in a dormitory of their own with their ayah and the matron. The dormitory, like all the others, has a leader. The maintenance of order and discipline of the entire hostel is the responsibility of a body of twelve senior girls, each of whom has a sufficiently long period of hostel experience to her credit. The members of this body have all the major duties assigned to them. They in their turn choose juniors from their dormitories to help them. Apart from their routine work, they are expected to hold themselves in readiness to meet any emergency that might arise without warning or notice. This entails the sacrifice of a good deal of time and energy on their part. The invaluable lessons in organisation and leadership they gain, is their due reward.

All through the week, the school curriculum, and extracurricular activity take up the childrens' time so that it is mostly during the week-ends that the corporate life of the community comes into play. If the child is to derive the benefit of this valuable experience, she has to spend this time in the hostel and not run away from there as she would from a hotel when the week's work is done. Saturday morning is a busy time for everyone. The weekly cleaning has to be done—all dormitories disinfected, beds aired, linen changed, furniture dusted and rearranged and things in general put back in place. The cobbler, the tailor, the lock repairer and others are there to take orders. By noon when the place is shipshape once more, the warden and a couple of the leaders go round on inspection. The dormitory that has done the cleaning most thoroughly and the dining table that has the neatest linen, get honourable mention. Occasionally, individual prizes are also offered. Saturday afternoon and all Sunday the girls are free. It

is then that they relax and write their weekly letters, see to arrears of work, get to know one another and make friends among themselves. Then, too, it is that they get a chance of making the acquaintance of the teachers who live in the hostel. They also get together for a "Make and Mend" hour when they not only make and mend things, but discuss their problems and plan what they want to do to make their life together a success. Two special parties are held on an average each term, one at mid-term and the other at the end of it. On these occasions the dining room is specially decorated and after dinner, entertainment or community games are provided in the school hall. At Christmas a fund is raised by contributions from teachers and girls, and gifts distributed to the servants. Everyone subscribes liberally towards this fund because most of our servants have put in long years of devoted service and because individual tipping is strictly forbidden. Going to the cinema is a very popular pastime. Impromptu organisation of a long walk on moonlight nights after dinner or a visit to the beach by the first bus that leaves Thyagarayanagar at 5-30 a.m. always hold a special appeal. A small tuck shop is run by the girls themselves and Spencer's ice-cream man, the bangle seller and the flower seller have always been welcome week-end visitors of the hostel.

The development of an upright character that upholds spiritual values and principles in these future citizens of our country has been the greatest concern of all who are interested in the hostel. No pain is spared to instil in these young minds the belief in the existence of a loving just God without whose aid and guidance no one can get very far. A certain amount of schoolgirl morality is encouraged. This helps them fight out their own battles to a great extent without making silly complaints.

As most of the girls come from families very well placed, special effort is made to teach them the right use of money. They are taught that happiness does not always radiate from the multitude of things we possess but from our ability to appreciate the wealth of the "Carol and the Colour" we hold in common with our fellow men.

HAPPY RECOLLECTIONS

I first joined the staff of Vidyodaya in 1938 when the new Hostel and school buildings were being erected. I was fresh from college and I entered the portals of the school with fear and trembling not knowing what sort of welcome I would receive; but my fears were soon dispelled.

When I noticed in what spacious grounds the school building was situated, I felt very happy, for I am one who loves nature. The beautiful shady mango grove lends itself to be used as a playground, as a nursery, as a lunch room, or as a cosy nook for teachers and students to spend their leisure hours and chit chat, the branches being used as seats. Twice a year this grove puts on a festive appearance when we have our "Sports Day" and the "Anniversary", which are both outdoor functions. The quiet that pervades the whole atmosphere is soothing, for Vidyodayites are "far from the madding crowd", and the dust and bustle of Madras streets.

The class rooms, though small, are airy and well-ventilated. It is a pleasure to teach the children. They are lovable and responsive, and many a time when I was depressed, and out of sorts with the world as it were, there would be a tap at the door, and after my "come in" the sight of a cheerful face appeared like a silver lining to a dark cloud. At first I did not like to be a teacher, but it was after living with the staff and pupils of Vidyodaya that I decided to be a teacher and serve the institution. As we have small classes, the teachers naturally take an individual interest in the pupils; this has resulted in many healthy friendships between staff and pupils, a feature absent in many schools. The staff act as advising members for the various houses, helping and guiding the heads and prefects. It was a pleasure to see the staff and pupils working together whenever there was "something on."

As a member of the staff, who has been in the school for some years I have always found great co-operation from my colleagues. We had a certain amount of freedom and scope to carry out experiments and projects during our teaching periods, and the fifteen minutes morning talks every day. Some have been successful, and some have been failures, but the encouragement given to us at such times have often spurred us on to "try, try again."

One feature of Vidyodaya which I can never forget is the various functions and ceremonies we had. The beautiful "Candle Light Ceremony", the Investiture of Heads and Prefects and the "Dance Drama" are things for which one longs when away from school.

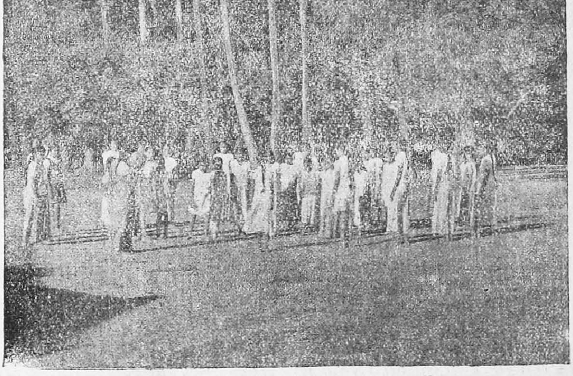
Besides, no one who has been in Vidyodaya, has left it without coming in contact with the moving spirit of the school—Mrs. Appasamy. She has been a "Mother" to those of us who leave our homes for the first time and join the school either as

pupils or teachers. She has always taken an individual interest in the staff—entertaining them by inviting them for week-ends, tea-parties, and dinners. She has been very kind to those of us who have fallen ill, not only visiting us in the hospital, but also sending such dishes as would tempt any patient to get better. Many a staff member has convalesced in her house. Some of those who have been ill have been granted sick leave and return to work after a year or six months. She has always shown appreciation of the work done by the staff by gifts and letters when they left as brides, or for better appointments. Pupils have been encouraged to show their love and appreciation for the staff when they are sick by sending flowers, visiting them, and writing cheerful letters. Sometimes teachers and pupils have got together and started a fund to be given to a bereaved family of a deceased or sick staff member to be utilised for any purpose the family thinks fit. At present the daughter of one such member of the staff is being educated by the school.

The staff and pupils of Vidyodaya make it a lively place–and thanks to the efforts of our present warden–a lovely place where flowers bloom, and the laughter of children mingled with the cheerful voices of the staff, echo through the walls and garden.

I wish Vidyodaya all success, and may the Silver Jubilee recall many more happy thoughts to those who are devoted to it.

M. David.



Our Mango Grove

EXTRACTS FROM THE INSPECTION REPORTS

1935–36 :—*General.*—The aim of this institution is that its pupils be well bred, well cultured and well disciplined. Every effort is made by the management of this institution to emphasize culture and art in the scheme of training of its pupils. Commendable efforts have been made during the year to encourage the celebration of festivals on organized, disciplined and artistic lines—and the resultant effects have been a matter for congratulation. It is strongly urged that permanent accommodation be arranged so that the programme of expansion for the next five years be arranged.

(Sd.) M. PRAGER.

1936–37 :—The tone of the school is excellent.

Very practical work has been done on social service lines. Organised relief by the pupils of this school has been associated with the work of the Leper Home, Saidapet and flood relief funds. A high standard of moral teaching is built up through social work, through the celebrations of artistic festivals and this links up the life of the school with the Home life of the pupil.

The fact that children of all castes are assembled in this institution in a residential way makes for a broadened outlook and a more practical synthesis of religious teaching.

Domestic Science teaching continues under the direction of Miss Abraham and the work is made practical. It is however considered that better provision be made for demonstration purposes in the school.

(Sd.) M. PRAGER.

1937–38 :—One of the best hostels attached to any girls' school, clean and comfortable rooms, excellent sanitary conditions, wholesome food and above all careful supervision. This is a good residential school.

Result: S.S.L.C. Examination 1937 Very Good.

Discipline—Excellent. The school authorities seem to have understood the real meaning of the term discipline. Cheerful activity, disciplined freedom, steady attention, quiet work form the very essence of discipline of this school. There is an atmosphere of perfect harmony.

Dress—Neat, simple and artistic.

(Sd.) B. AMRUTHAMMAL.

1938–39 :—The school lays special stress on the teaching of Indian classical dances, pupils' movements are graceful and full of rhythmic music. The type of physical culture is the unique feature of this school. The moral tone of the school is very high.

High School English—A very high standard is maintained.

(Sd.) B. AMRUTHAMMAL.

1939–40 : *General* :—This is a very fine type of educational institution for girls which places due emphasis on all aspects of education, not merely the literary side.

The appeal to the emotional aspect of the mind has created in the pupil a strong aesthetic sense and has cultivated beautiful and desirable habits. The pupils educated here must have a rich capacity for imbibing influences of all that is graceful and attractive in life and a further capacity for reflecting that sense of beauty on her environment. Teaching is good. Management is good.

(Sd.) M. VARUGIS.

1940–41 :—The percentage of passes at the Public Examination in 1940 was 100 as against 77 in 1939.

Special emphasis is placed on 'B' subjects like Home Science, Drawing and Music. The attention given to these subjects is a distinct feature of the school.

The Headmistress and the Staff are to be congratulated for maintaining a distinctly efficient standard of work in every branch of the curriculum and in securing excellent examination results.

(Sd.) M. VARUGIS.

1941–42 :—The arrangement made for the residence of pupils is good. The pupils' examination results are excellent. The percentage of passes this year also is 100.

'B' subjects get very good attention and very efficient work is done in these subjects.

Physical training is well organised and pupils are interested in out-door activities. Throw Ball, Badminton, Tennikoit, Net Ball and Tennis are played in the evenings.

The school spends 1½ hours per day in games and drill.

Domestic Science is a subject which is taught in very great detail with particular emphasis on practical training. The institution is conducted on up-to-date and efficient lines.

(Sd.) M. VARUGIS.

1945–46 :—Physical training and play programme are receiving good attention. Moral and religious instruction are receiving adequate attention. Efforts made to develop good behaviour and personality in pupils are commended.

Domestic Science is given prominence and Needle-craft, Handwork and Drawing are taught on excellent lines—Pupils' æsthetic susceptibilities are developed and sublimated through these creative arts.

Instruction is good—children are being trained to do written work neatly and methodically. It was a real pleasure to go through their exercise books. Correction work is done carefully. Text books have been carefully chosen and library work well organized.

The Founder-Correspondent of this institution, Mrs. Paul Appasamy designed the school with classic ideals in view and I can unhesitatingly state that the school has justified her high objectives, and the Headmistress and other members of the staff as well as the students are carrying on their work actuated by that 'spirit of the school'—*esprit de corps*—which fills the school atmosphere with joyous activities

and pleasant human companionship. The Public Examination results continue to be excellent—cent per cent results being scored this year also and efforts taken by one and all to develop that desirable spirit required to give the school a 'good tone' are highly commended.

(Sd.) M. S. SWARNAMBAL.

1946–47:—It is pleasing to note that the school is keeping up the tradition of securing a high percentage of passes in the S. S. L. C. Public Examination.

A high standard of discipline has been reached by the efforts of the staff and the whole-hearted co-operation of the pupils. The pupils are all lady-like in their behaviour.

The fine school tone that the school has developed is the backbone of the school and will stand the pupils in good stead for preparing them to take up their place in the home.

By means of talks at the assembly meetings, through mottos put up in conspicuous places and by precept the pupils are made conscious of the necessity for good behaviour.

Arts and Crafts.—The development of these seems to be a special feature of the school and the training the pupils are receiving in music, drawing and painting is commendable indeed. The residential pupils are at a great advantage in having proper facilities to imbibe the general training given to them as inmates of a home. The school has a great influence for good in shaping the character of young girls, thus helping to fulfil the true aim of education.

(Sd.) SATYABAMA ACHUTHAN.

1947–48:—The results at the 1947 Examination were 12/13; very good as usual.

'B' subjects are taught on excellent lines. Craft Education is a special feature. Needle-work is good and Home Science practically and well done.

Discipline, Dress etc.—Excellent.

Moral and Religious Instruction:—A very impressive phase of the organisation. The whole school breathes an atmosphere of purity and inspired calm. There is formal moral instruction imparted within school hours in all the classes and forms besides the talks given at the assembly and the silent influence of great sayings put up.

Dancing, Music (both Indian and English) and Painting are special features highly commended.

The management is congratulated on another year of very good work.

(Sd). G. SANKUNNI.

MRS. APPASAMY WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE STAFF 1949

4 HEADS AND PREFECTS OF THE FOUR HOUSES WITH STAFF ADVISORS

MRS. E. S. APPASAMY

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LIFE OF THE FOUNDER

AS we celebrate the Silver Jubilee of the school this year our thoughts naturally centre round its founder Mrs. E. S. Appasamy. Mrs. Appasamy had a clear vision of the right type of education for girls as early as 1924 when she started Vidyodaya at Pallavaram.

E. Sornam Cornelius, second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Cornelius, was born in Dindigul on June 24, 1878. She attended her first school at the age of five. She was very much loved and petted by her teachers. She was good at her studies, at singing and dance, but she had a bad temper and was rather self-willed. At the early age of six, she received prizes for good work at school When she was about seven, her saintly mother used to send her out with her eldest sister to collect money for the Sunday School Union. She learned the game of begging for a noble cause at an early stage. As her father was a P.W.D. Officer and was transferred from place to place the children could not continue their education in any one school. Her parents were anxious to give them a sound English education. In 1888, the two elder daughters were sent to the Presidency Training School, and to Bangalore in 1889. In 1903 they were sent to the Epiphany Girls' School managed by the Sisters of Wantage in Poona. The Sisters influenced their character a great deal. It was here that Sornam learned to conquer her temper and to be kind, gentle and helpful to mother. Her mother was greatly pleased with this change in her daughter and started relying on her help for religious teaching and discipline of the younger ones in the family. While she was in Poona, Manoramabai, Pandita Ramabai's daughter joined the school, and she got to know Ramabai and her work for child widows. Sornam was given the gold brooch for being the best student of the year in the Epiphany School. Ever since she attended the Poona school, her one desire was to have a school like it in South India. Her father had to stop sending the children to the school as bubonic plague broke out in Poona at that time. She was obliged to continue her education in Doveton, Madras. She passed her F.A. from there receiving a gold medal for Latin, and B.A. from the Presidency College receiving a gold medal for English. She was very anxious to help Pandita Ramabai in her noble work for orphans and widows. She joined Ramabai's institution at Mukti in 1905, and helped in various kinds of work till 1907.

In December 1907, she married Mr. Paul Appasamy, M.A., LL.B. (Cantab). In 1909 Mr. Appasamy was offered a post in the Law College and so they settled down in Madras. It was during this time that Mrs. Appasamy was inspired to write Pandita Ramabai's life in Tamil and English.

Mrs. Appasamy has travelled widely. In 1914, she went to England and from there to U.S.A. Her brother

J. M. Kumarappa, who is now the Director of Tata's Social Science Institute, Bombay, was in Boston at that time. She visited various interesting educational and social service institutions, and was very much impressed by everything that she saw in that wealthy, democratic country. After six months' stay there, she left for England. It was during the first World War. The steamer had to go by a roundabout route and they landed in Ireland. She visited Dublin and other places in Ireland and then left for England. Her brother, J. C. Kumarappa, the Secretary of the All India Village Industries, was studying accountancy in London at that time. He took her to various places of interest, Mrs. Appasamy was surprised to find how well the British people cared for their poor and suffering people. She was embittered at the thought that the British who had India under their control for so many years, had done very little for the uplift of the masses.

Mrs. Appasamy returned home in 1915. She served on the Y.W.C.A. Committee for some time. Mrs. Whitehead, wife of the Bishop of Madras, asked her to help in social service work. She had three paid workers under her for work in the slums. They ran a Health Centre where simple medicines, supplied by the Government Maternity Hospital, were given out every morning to the poor. During times of floods and heavy rains the social workers did a great deal to relieve the sufferings of the poor. Mrs. Appasamy suggested to the higher authorities that cheap houses should be constructed for the poor people. But nothing was done at that time. She continued the social work till 1938 when she moved into Mambalam. In 1916, she was asked to be the organising Secretary of the National Missionary Society. The society needed funds for its evangelical, educational and social work in the villages in various parts of India. Mrs. Appasamy formed a women's committee in Madras and raised funds year after year by holding a sale. She travelled a great deal and organised new branches of the Ladies' Auxiliary in various parts of India. She continued to be the organising secretary till 1926. She received the Kaiser-i-Hind medal in recognition of the public service she has rendered.

The vision of the school had never left her. She spoke about it to her husband who was the judge of the City Civil Court at that time. He said that she must have at least Rs. 10,000 on hand before she could start the school. In 1923, a small committee was formed at Kodaikanal to put down the ideals of the school. After fasting and prayer her saintly mother gave her the inspired passage of Isaiah Chapter 60 as the corner stone for the new venture. The scheme was drafted, printed and circulated. Mrs. Appasamy appealed to her own people first and collected Rs. 4,000. She collected the rest from the Andhra districts. Pallavaram was chosen as a suitable place. Mrs. K. Sathianadhan was the first Principal. The school was opened on the 24th February, 1924, with only 3 children. Though at first many did not trust this venture, the number of pupils gradually increased, and the school moved to San Thome.

In 1924 Mrs. Appasamy was asked to go to the Quadrennial Conference of the Y.W.C.A. in Washington to represent India. She spoke about the school to many, and tried to raise some funds. She then left for England and organised a committee to send out an English lady to teach Western music and English and to raise money for her support. In 1926 Mrs. Appasamy visited Malaya and collected Rs. 10,000 for the new school buildings. In 1928 she again left for U.S.A. and England for collection of school funds. On her way back to India on the steamer, she met Lady Tata and Sir Cowasji Jehangir who donated Rs. 1,500 and Rs. 3,000 for the school.

The school had grown by now. It moved into Rutland Gate, Nungambakkam in 1929 and had to pay a heavy rent of Rs. 375 per mensem. Mrs. Appasamy had still to collect funds for their new school buildings. The teachers and pupils helped her by getting up annual entertainments. At this time Mrs. Appasamy was a nominated member of the Madras Corporation. It was when she served as a councillor that she persuaded the Corporation to sell a piece of land of about 13 acres at Mambalam at cost price for putting up the school buildings. She was also a Fellow of the Madras University for two terms.

In 1933, Mr. Appasamy, Chief Judge of the Court of Small Causes, who had always stood by her and helped her wholeheartedly in all her endeavours and spared no money or sacrifice on his part, passed away. He had identified himself with the school. It was an irreparable loss. Many wondered if the school would continue to exist, as he was such a great support. Their eldest daughter had just returned from U.S.A. and England after her degree and the Froebel course. She has been a source of great comfort and help to Mrs. Appasamy in carrying on the work of the school. As years rolled on, and Mrs. Appasamy was not able to shoulder all the responsibilities, she has come forward to take up a great deal of the burden of the school.

In 1938, the new buildings at Mambalam were completed and the school moved into its own premises. The numbers have increased rapidly. But Mrs. Appasamy does not feel that her work for the school is complete. She still goes about with the beggar's bowl, as she herself puts it, for collection of funds for new buildings for the advanced teaching of home science, art, music and dance.

Simplicity has been the key note of the Founder's life. Mrs. Appasamy dislikes the wearing of costly sarees and jewels. Money spent on them is a waste. The children are allowed only two or three expensive sarees and very little by way of jewellery. They are taught to think of higher and nobler things in life. She has chosen the jasmine as the emblem of our school, an unassuming and simple flower, but with a fragrance spreading far and wide.

Mrs. Appasamy's genuine love for the individual child and teacher and her kindness and sympathy have endeared her to all. She is a mother to all in the school. Her confidence and trust in the teachers inspire them to a high standard of efficiency

and service. Her advice to the teacher is always, "Win over the child by love and sympathy—avoid punishments". On one or two occasions during her morning visit to the school, she saw that some boys were being punished. She reprimanded the teacher and the boys escaped the punishment. Teachers and pupils alike enjoy her hospitality. Her home is the centre for our parties and social evenings. During times of merriment and festivities at school, Mrs. Appasamy is one with the children.

Mrs. Appasamy is tolerant and broadminded in her outlook on life. Though a devoted Christian, she finds good in other religions. We have had at our assemblies twice a week Tamil songs, and readings and prayers from the Hindu and other scriptures. The children are thus taught to respect each other's religious views. Tamilians, Telugus, Malayalees, Gujeratis, Bengalis Hindus, Christians and Muslims live together as members of one family. The common language so far has been English which is a great unifying influence. It was suggested by orthodox parents that the hostel would run on more efficient lines if Mrs. Appasamy could start different sections like Brahmin, non-Brahmin, Tamil etc., for food arrangements. But it was against Mrs. Appasamy's ideas of communal harmony. The hostel with its free and friendly relationship between the teachers and the taught, is a real home to the children.

Though Mrs. Appasamy is not able to visit us as often as she used to, she is still the pivot of the school. She makes the final decision on many weighty questions, and hers is the right solution for many intricate problems. May she be blessed with long life and good health to see all her aims for Vidyodaya fully realised.

R. Jacob

Sornam Cornelius, aged five

JUST A TRIBUTE

"HEAR the bell, Thelma, it's for prayers, let's hasten." Mrs. Sathianadhan, the Principal, was awaited but as she did not come, Miss. Howarth led the small group of three boarders and two staff members in worship. Mrs. Sathianthan, however, did not disappoint us in the Shakespeare class. Dignified though she was, the motherly interest she evinced in us won our loyalty. "The Merchant of Venice" was taught and enacted for us so that we not only understood but actually enjoyed the beauty and wealth of the play. Be it English, History or Mathematics the same lucid explanations enabled us to tackle the subject with confidence.

As Vidyodaya grew in strength, life in school became more formal. Classes were held according to the time table—the intimacy of a small household gave place to organised routine. Miss. Cornelius, fond of time well spent, saw to the smooth working of the different groups and that each group had a chance to learn Arts and Crafts besides the subjects required for examination purposes. Duties were entrusted to the children to develop their promptness and efficiency. Older girls adopted little sisters for whom they were responsible. Miss. Hersey, who joined the staff, brought with her the love for music and the infant orchestra soon claimed the children's leisure time. Under Mr. P. Sambamoorthy, Indian Music was not neglected. Indeed music pervaded the school.

What with the Public Exams. to prepare for, the High School grew slowly to an efficient unit with specialists to handle the various subjects. Of those who contributed much to its development, it is difficult to forget Miss. T. P. Jayanthy, Miss. R. Jacob, Mr. K. Varadachari and Miss. A. Mathulla. Mr. A. Venkatrama Iyer laid so sure a foundation in mathematics that cent per cent results were maintained for six to seven years.

In the meanwhile the hostel also grew. Miss. V. S. Kantayya, a former pupil of the school, grew with it till she gradually took charge of the entire responsibility. The pupils received a sound training in self-management, self-reliance and consideration for others—the old pupils still remember with gratitude the many useful things they learnt unconsciously under her clever guidance. Under Miss. Mahadevan who took charge in 1940 for over five years as hostel warden, the children enjoyed their stay as resident pupils in the school.

Recognition and public exams. involved the maintenance of records and accounts. Mr. A. S. Divyanathan who undertook the responsibility in 1935 proved capable in handling the increasing work. Prompt and systematic, he kept the numerous individual accounts of the pupils and maintained the registers required for the D.P.I's office. He participated in the school activities and shared in

the life of the school. His daughter Nallamuthu Divyanathan joined Vidyodaya two years later. Talented and capable, she rendered a decade of useful service. Her teaching and discipline were appreciated by parents, colleagues and most of all by the little ones who came under her influence.

What of the extra-curricular activities of the school? Mrs. Briggs through her love for our children made them enjoy singing and music. Miss. Coralie Taylor, gifted with a beautiful contralto voice, sustained and built up their interest in Western music, both vocal and instrumental. The pupils of the school were able to render two operettas "Zurika" and "Moon Queen" with such success that they were asked to broadcast from time to time. Indian Music received an impetus when Mr. N. C. Parthasarathy was appointed as Violinist, Mr. Venkatasamy Raju as a Veena tutor and Mr. P. Balakrishnan as group singing instructor.

Mr. Kiron Sinha from Shantiniketan first discovered the latent talents of the children in form and colour. Reserved but truly gifted, he was able to stimulate their imagination and love of beauty. It was not till they came under Mr. Sushil Mukerjee's influence, however, that the children developed a facility of expression through form and colour. Their pride and love for the art of painting and drawing was seen when they refused to sell their pictures at the Art Exhibition held in 1944.

Without mentioning Dancing our aesthetic training would be incomplete. It was in 1935 that Mr. Kamini Kumar Sinha joined Vidyodaya to teach Manipuri Dancing. The grace and rhythm of this form of dance is especially suited for school girls as it gives them poise and grace. Handicapped by shyness and lack of knowlege of the language, Mr. Kamini Kumar Sinha started work with great odds against him but he soon won our pupils over to the art—so much so that they were, in a couple of years, able to render plays through dance. Miss. R. Jacob, who is talented herself, was able to produce several Dance Dramas of singular beauty such as Tagore's "Chitra" and "Shap Mochan" and Kalidasa's "Sakuntala" with the co-operation of the dance master and the music masters.

Among those who have served the institution longest is Miss. Jacob, the First Assistant and Bursar. While she acted as Headmistress (1929-1933) some of the traditional activities of Vidyodaya were started. Leaders were chosen to help with the discipline of the school and hostel. Student committees shared the responsibility of conducting games, dramatic and social service activities. Miss. S. Samuel has worked steadily for the last eighteen years. Mrs. S. Kannamah with fifteen years experience as Handwork teacher has always been learning the new and useful, and taught the children to make good use of their leisure with needlework, knitting, basketry, spinning and weaving, and numerous other types of craft work. Miss. Mathew proved herself an able and

interesting teacher for nine years and now has been no less capable as the hostel warden for the last three years. Mrs. S. P. Rajam for over ten years has rendered useful service to the younger children of the school. To these and many others who have worked for shorter periods, our thanks are due.

Vidyodaya has been criticised as a "child-centred" institution and it is not possible to think of the School without the contribution of the children. There have been many by now who have passed through its portals. As we look back through the years several images of girls who distinguished themselves in school in their studies, others by means of their talents, and still others who won a place for themselves in the hearts of all through the service they have rendered, pass in succession before our eyes. We are proud of those who have added lustre to the training they have received in school by the useful service they have rendered to the country. Among those who were called to a nobler life in eternity while in school, it is difficult to forget bright little Thangam Thomas, capable V. L. Venkatrathnam, the beautiful Sumangali Krishnan and Vasundra the peacemaker.

As we come to the 25th milestone, before turning the corner, we cannot help but think of those friends of the school who have helped as members of the Board of Management. Mr. Appasamy who shouldered much of the responsibility and anxiety in the early years of the School, loved to entertain and amuse the children whenever he had an opportunity of inviting them for parties or taking them out to picnics to Red Hills, Adyar, or to the beach. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddy in spite of her heavy responsibilities gave her time and energy. Mr. A. Rama Rao, Educational Officer, made it a point to attend our school events and functions and contribute to the children's happiness. Mr. S. V. B. Row has for over ten years given us willingly his valuable time and legal experience. There comes to mind, too, the names of many parents, officers of the Educational Department, and friends in this country and abroad who have supported and encouraged us by their interest, faith and gifts—to all such we are grateful for making what was but a child's dream for South India, a living reality—Vidyodaya.

ART AND CRAFT IN EDUCATION

By Miss Eleanor Rivett

IF education, whether in school or college, can be brought into refreshing contact with the Renaissance of Indian arts and crafts which has already begun, we shall give to it that quality which will, I believe, teach how to live and to delight in living. The problem of all people of goodwill, and educationalists surely ***are*** people of goodwill, is to discover how education can be effective and at the same time joyous.

Some girls' schools in India are finding great delight in a revival of the old arts and crafts of this country. They have learnt to seek their inspiration in the riches of their own cultural heritage. Thus we may now see small children doing basketry with palm-leaves readily obtained from a neighbouring jungle, using local dyes and rejoicing in the creating of baskets, boxes, pochettes, fans and other fascinating articles, attractive in shape and colour. This is a craft within the reach even of the village school, and with considerable scope for originality of treatment.

In weaving, too, schools with inspired teachers have discovered endless possibilities for the planning of handwork courses, from simple beginnings in tablet-weaving in the lower school to the more elaborate work which can be done, still on easily constructed looms, in the upper classes—work which calls for appropriate design and harmonising colour effects.

In a land where excellent clay is obtainable from river bank or tank, pottery in its manifold branches, local or imported, forms a popular type of handicraft as such, and clay is a useful medium for modelling in relation to geography, history, hygiene, or other so-called "bookish" subjects.

I have seen art and handicraft even take the place of writing as the medium of expression for examination purposes. For instance, there is a question in a history test requiring the enumeration of some examples of the beneficent work carried out by the Emperor Asoka on behalf of his subjects. The children are encouraged to show by means of a series of scenes or models, in which they use clay, paper, cardboard, grass, wood or any other material ready to hand, how Asoka caused roads to be made and planted with shade-trees, how he had wells dug at intervals along these highways for the pilgrims, how he founded simple way-side hospitals for the care of the sick....There may be a question on the contribution of the Moghuls to architecture which will call forth most exquisitely drawn or modelled representations of the Taj Mahal and other "dreams in marble" peculiar to that period. The History teacher using this method of examination from time to time insists that it shows, as the ordinary written composition may not necessarily show, how the text of the history-book and her own oral teaching have been comprehended. It takes real knowledge to get detail

correct even in regard to the type of well used in Asoka's day, or the correlation of turret and dome in one of Shah Jehan's palaces.

The old art of stamping or printing on fabrics has had a notable revival and has sent school-children experimenting with potato, lino or wood, making blocks, after the style of the bazaar dyes or stamps which in themselves are significant records of indigenous design. And then there is colour-stamping. I discovered in a school somewhere in South India that the girls were using for their block-printing on attractive fabrics wood blocks designed and carved by the boys in a neighbouring school—good co-operation based on a very right and proper differentiation of handicrafts as between boys and girls!

I am somewhat afraid of the expression "vocational" or even "pre-vocational" training lest we be tempted to sacrifice the joy of creation, which is the child's rightful heritage, to a commercial enterprise; but I sometimes think colour-printing on saris, for instance, might well gain in artistic effect by the development, in schools, of original design and the use of traditional pattern in design composition, for fabric printing, where alas! there is occasionally no suggestion of India's wealth of excellent design but merely a travesty of something Western, in effect quite inartistic.

School-girls and boys, trained to seek, in a museum or art gallery, in illustrated books or magazines, Indian design for any of these and kindred crafts and for a great variety of needlework, have had revealed to them the immense worth of the mural frescoes of the Ajanta Caves and other monuments of the artistically rich Buddhist era: they have realised the value of the restrained artistry of the Pearl Mosque and similar wonders of the Moghul period when the Emperors were the patrons of the arts: they have seen, perhaps for the first time, the glory of Hindu architecture through the ages, with its beauty of form and richness of decoration. It is an immense gain in these days, that India's schools are returning to her past with its cultural greatness, to revivify the ancient arts and crafts and to give them their rightful place in education.

One of the most noteworthy sources of inspiration in this direction of which I know has come from a Bengal folk-art long practised in the home, by women and girls. It is known as Alpona and consists in the decoration of the floors and door-ways, also of piris or low stools, on special occasions, social and religious. School girls were encouraged to familiarise themselves with the art as known in their own families. With the aid of their grandmothers they have transcribed to paper the patterns used in their homes and have given them more permanent form in some school-craft. Instead of the old method, still happily followed in many a home, of tracing the outlines on the floor, in white rice-flour paste or red powder, to be obliterated by the first foot-fall, they have painted them in water-colours on piris or used, perhaps the whole of a pattern, perhaps merely a phrase

of it, as decoration on pottery or wood or basketry, or again have made it the motif of a woven, stamped or embroidered design.

Alpona, which is akin to, though rather more elaborate than, the Kolam of South India, is redolent of the home. It expresses a welcome to the guest ; it is essentially the woman's contribution to the beautifying of the dwelling and through it all is demonstrated the joy of the simple village girl in the flowers and trees of her country-side, or the more sophisticated art of the cultured queen of the city home.

If, as I believe, joy of creation is an essential part of education, then the value of arts and crafts in education is incalculable. I believe those who have the benefit of such training at school are likely to be far more successfully educated than others at college. In the world around them, in the world of books, in the recreations possible in and from college, there will be infinitely more chance of their appreciative participation when girls and boys have learnt the love of the beautiful and the joy of creation at school.

India is happy in her educationalists who cherish the belief that ancient India's heritage and Western educational experience together can contribute to the best that is yet to be in that education which teaches how to live and delight in life.

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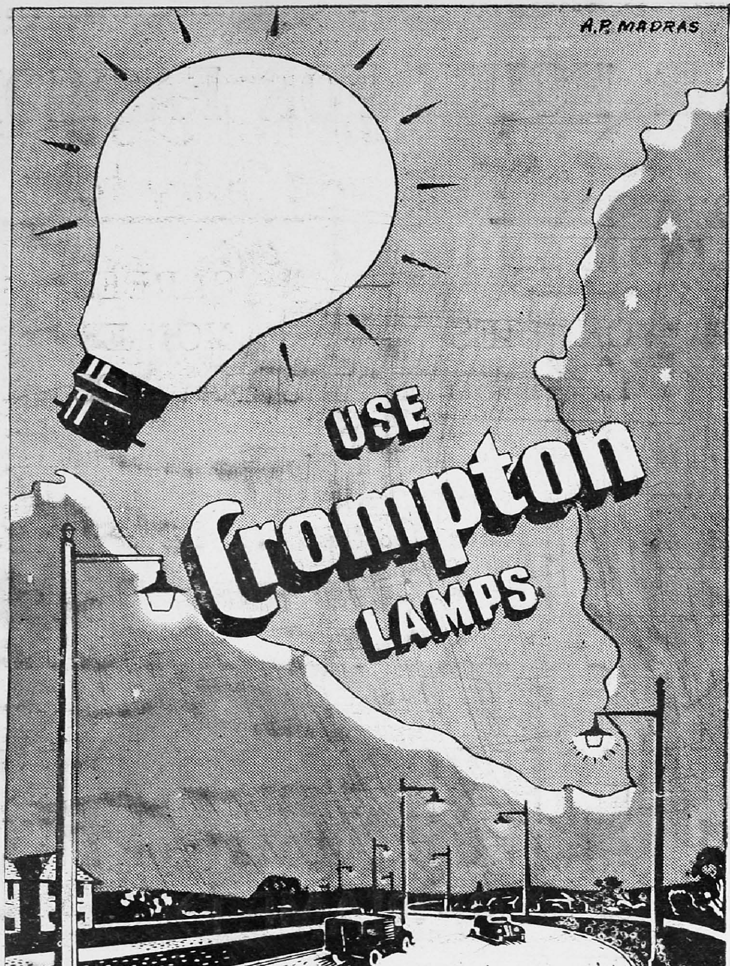

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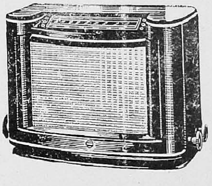

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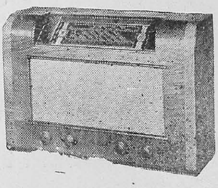

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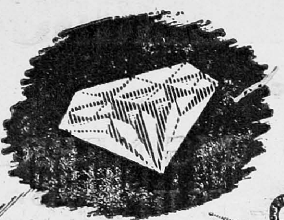

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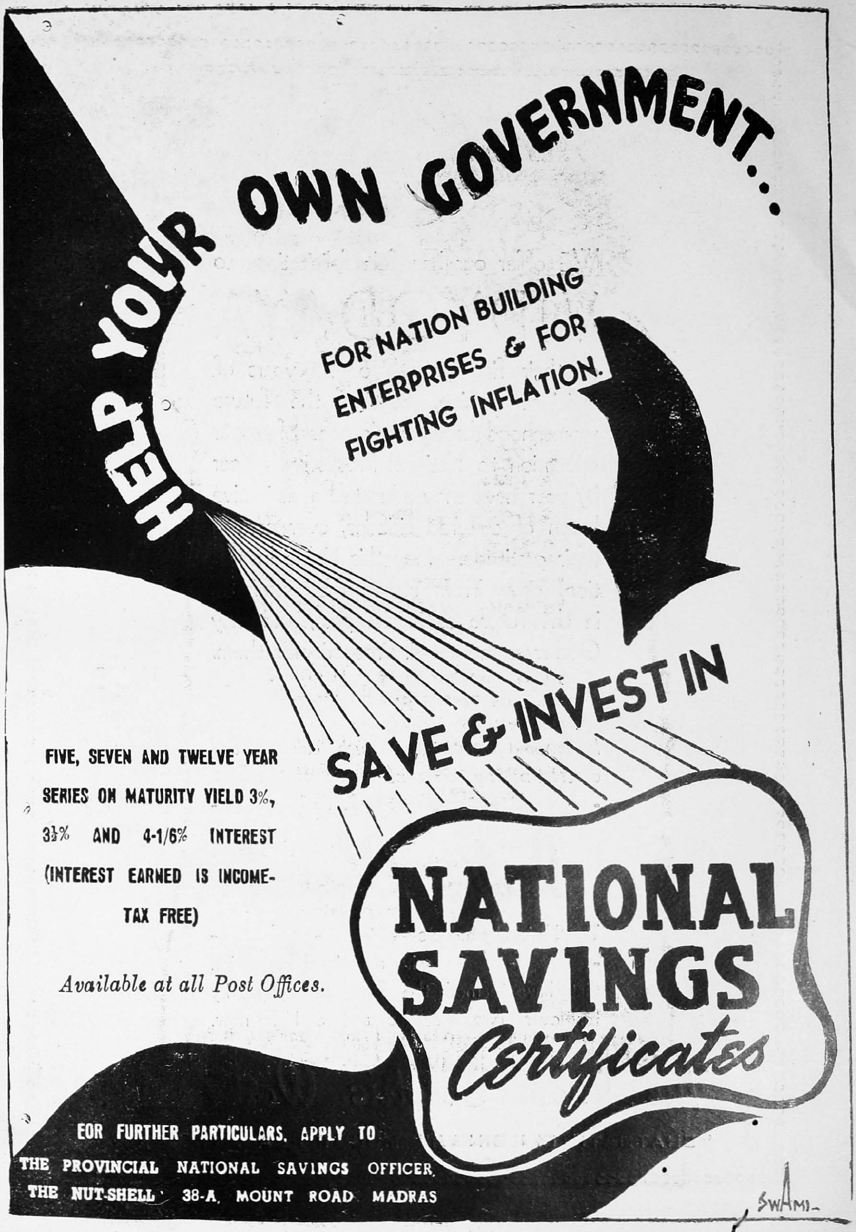
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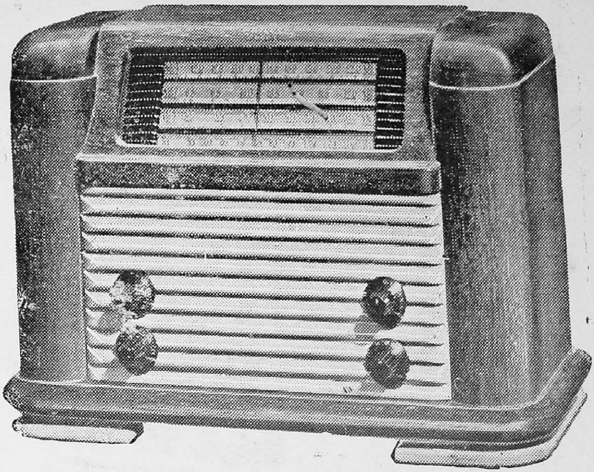

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